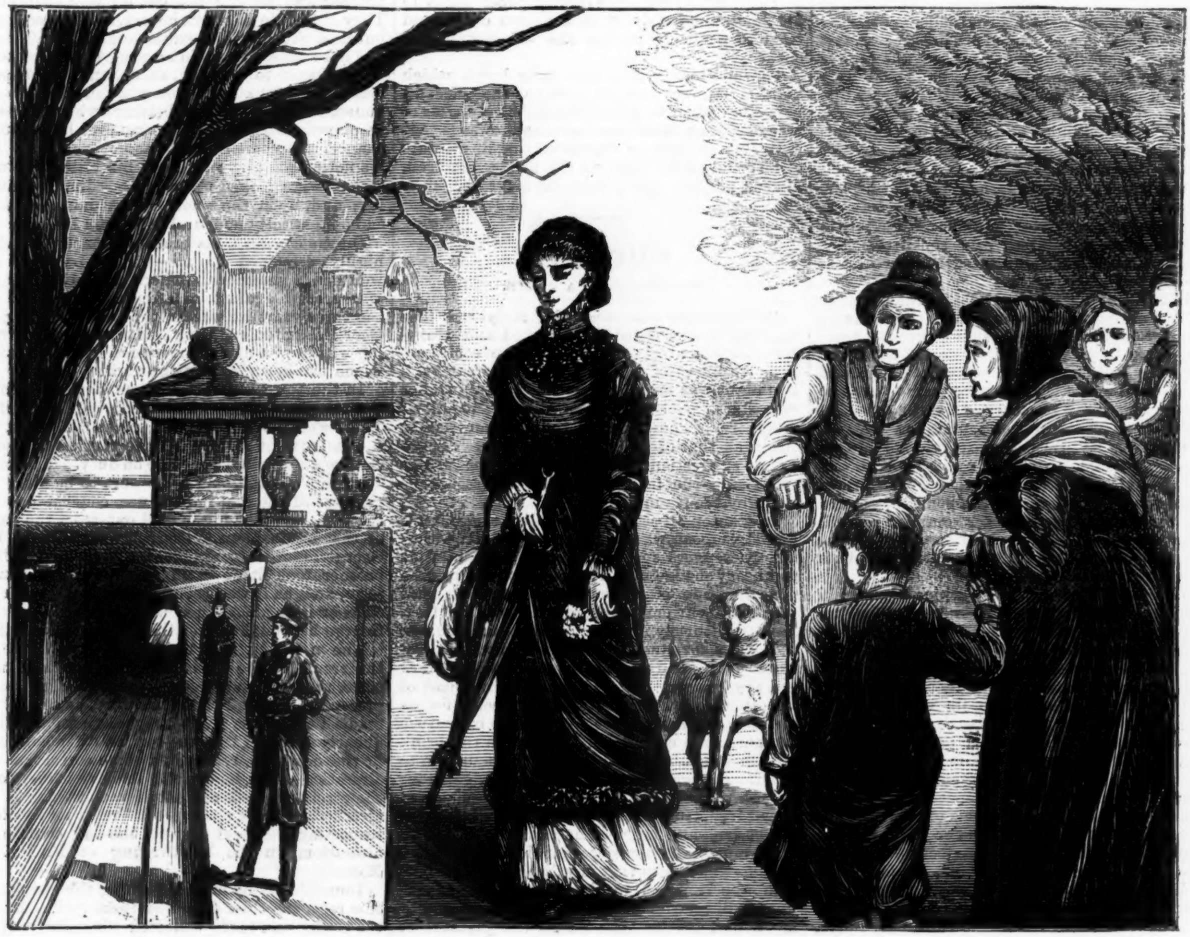
THE
LONDON READER
An Illustrated Family Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, Domestic and General Information.

No. 1000.—VOL. XXXIX.] FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 1, 1882. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.



[AGNES CAME FORTH AGAIN AND WALKED IN THE SUNSHINE.]

SWEET INISFAIL.

A ROMANCE.

BY RICHARD DOWLING,

AUTHOR OF

"The Mystery of Killard," "The Weird Sisters," "The Duke's Sweetheart," "A Sapphire Ring," etc.

PART I.—INHERITANCE.

CHAPTER V.

BY LAND.

NEXT evening, at the appointed time, Fitzgerald drove up to the door in a hansom. He so arranged it that there was no time to lose; that, in fact, there was no time for him to go into the house. Having got a second hansom, into and upon which the joint luggage was tumbled, the two friends jumped into the first hansom and drove off to Euston. They had but five minutes to get their tickets and see their luggage in. At last they were seated in a compartment with two other men. The guard whistled, the engine whistled, and, with a motion which began almost imperceptibly, the long train glided out of the station, and George Manton had bidden adieu to London for——

"You will stay the whole month, Manton," said Fitzgerald, leaning across to his friend.

"If nothing very important calls me away," answered George.

What Manton meant then was, if nothing very particular recalled him to London. As far as his future movements went, his own conception was, that having stopped about a month with Fitzgerald at Clonmore, he should return to London, to his duties at the office of the New Building Society, to his home at 57, Doncaster Street, to his wife, Helen, and his little boy. Although he was troubled in mind, he had no warning of what was about to happen.

The seven to eight hours' run to Holyhead was passed by the two friends without any conversation of moment. They tried to go to sleep, and failed; and then tried to keep awake, and failed. It was a smoking compartment, and they smoked. Having failed to get either thoroughly asleep or thoroughly awake, they succeeded in getting thoroughly wretched. Now and then one spoke a less than commonplace sentence to the other, and then sneered at himself for being such a fool as to utter such trash. And before each always, for neither was a good sailor, loomed the phantom dread of those sixty-four miles of instable sea lying before them.

No man is a hero to his valet; no man, who is not a good sailor, is a hero when a sea voyage

is right in front. In spite of scalding themselves with soup at Chester, and of the contents of a flask, divided between them, neither felt himself equal to the effort of even seeming cheerful.

Of course, there was a wide difference between the conditions under which the two men were visiting Ireland. One went to inherit a property which would put him into a position he had long dreamed of; the other ostensibly sought the recovery of vigour and spirits, lost by too long and close an application to city life.

Michael Fitzgerald was seven-and-twenty years of age. He was blue-eyed, fresh-complexioned, slightly above the medium height, slender, elegant. His forehead was white and compact; and the great charm of his face, for no one could see his face without being attracted by it, was owing to a singular peculiarity. The white, neat forehead, with the delicate drawing of the eyebrows, and the clear lines of almost effeminate delicacy in the temples, was always possessed by a tranquil intellectuality. Rarely was the calm of that beautiful forehead disturbed, while the full blue eyes below danced with the mirth or mischief of the passing moment, or grew grave and sympathetic at the sight of pain. The mouth was not particularly well formed; the lips were rather heavy, and the line between the lips too straight. But although it was somewhat weak, and lacking in character, it was infinitively sensitive. The chin receded, and also indicated some weakness of character.

He had a small income from house property in Dublin. He had not, up to this time, enough to marry on, and being seven-and-twenty years of age, and a kindly, affectionate, open-natured man, who loved well those whom he loved, and loved one in particular above all others, he wanted very badly to marry and settle down.

He was alone in the world, and had been so for many years. With the exception of his old granduncle, recently dead, he had not had any relative living for a long time; and this formed one of the many strands in the bond that bound him to George Manton, for outside the 57, Doncaster Street house, Manton spoke of no one who could claim blood-relationship with him.

With this ten thousand to which Fitzgerald had just succeeded, in addition to the fixed income he had always enjoyed, he should be able to marry and live in frugal comfort. There was, of course, the chance that the Clonmore property might fetch more than ten thousand. That was the least at which its value could be estimated, and he should be content, and he knew that her father would be content, that he and his sweetheart should marry on his old income, assisted by the interest on the ten thousand pounds. He knew that his sweetheart would have married him on his old income, but he could not think of asking her to share the home that should always have been conducted on a scale of painful economy. He had made up his mind to take any money he could get for the property rather than retain it. He should put the money it realized into Indian Railways, and thus, having secured close upon four hundred a year additional, he would have no longer any hesitation in asking Agnes to be his wife.

George Manton had told his friend Fitzgerald that his secret was not such a one as he should keep from his wife. For some time past, letters addressed in a large, bold hand had been coming to Manton at the office of the Society. He had brought none of these home. He had read them and destroyed them on the spot. He had never spoken of them or of the writer to either his wife or Fitzgerald until within the past four-and-twenty hours. The evening before, after Fitzgerald had left Doncaster Street, he had kept his word and told his wife.

They had had a long consultation about it in whispers. When it was over, they kissed as affectionately as ever, and he went out into the King's Road to purchase a few things he should want on his journey.

When he was gone, she went upstairs to the room in which the child's cot stood, and, taking one of the sleeping boy's small hands within her own two, she knelt beside him and wept, whispering:

"Oh, Freddy, darling! Freddy! whatever happens, won't you come with mamma? won't you stay with mamma?"

Then she went to her own room, and bathed her face in cold water to remove the trace of tears, and smoothed her hair, and touched her collar and her cuffs, to remove all trace of excitement or disturbance, and looked into the glass and smiled, trying to make that smile as joyous and encouraging and affectionate and worthy of George's love as ever. Then she stole down the stairs, timidly looking over her shoulder at times as she went.

When she reached the drawing-room, she pushed George's chair to its accustomed place by the lamp, laid the evening paper ready to his hand, and sat down in her own chair, and tried to persuade herself she was not frightened.

Those letters in the bold, free hand, which Manton had received and burnt at the office, all bore the postmark of Clonmore. The writer of those letters was in Clonmore, and towards that town George Manton was now flying at the rate of forty miles an hour to try and avert from himself and his family ruin and disgrace.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TALE OF A CRIME.

At length the train arrived at Holyhead. The two friends exchanged the cramped and wearying confinement of the train for the cool, spacious freshness of the deck of the steamboat. The night was moonless, cloudless, and blazing with stars. Not a breath of wind stirred along the shore. The water of the harbour was as placid as that of an ornamental lake. There was no suggestion that the great water was at hand, save the far-reaching silentness always found by the tranquil sea.

To Manton all seemed ghost-like and unreal. The steamboat was a phantom ship; the crew and passengers spectres of men; he himself an uneasy shade going forth upon a dreary mission, the issue of which, although it but half engaged his attention, wholly entranced his fear. The long journey in the train had been the last and most exhausting draught upon his resources. He had been enfeebled by overwork and the lassitude born of the city. He had of late been worn down by anxieties, communicable to no one, and his secret ate into his nature and paralyzed his energy. He was on the brink of ruin which he feared he should be unable to avoid. His was one of those spirits, generous enough to give all he had for the rescue of a friend from trouble or danger, but unwilling to accept such assistance as he was free to accord. It is a noble generosity that loves to give, a sublime generosity that is willing to take. The man who is proud, in the noble sense of the word, will take delight in accepting from a willing donor, for he knows that the pleasure of giving is one of the highest and most unalloyed belonging to man, and he will take such delight in the consciousness of the donor's happiness that there will be no space in his nature for entertaining the figure which he himself presents in the transaction.

When George Manton said, the evening before, that the last friend in the world to whom he would confide his present trouble was Fitzgerald, he had had in his mind the facts that in all likelihood money could relieve him in his present strait, and the certainty that if Fitzgerald knew this the latter would take no denial, but insist upon affording instant relief.

Manton was not sure that money alone could rid him of his burdens—in fact, he knew there was part of his burden against which money would be impotent; but he was sure money could do much. The sum he needed was not, from a man in Fitzgerald's present position, of very great importance; but to him, Manton, the want of it meant things he had scarcely the courage to face. One of the secrets which George Manton would tell to no friend, not even to Fitzgerald, and which he had told to his wife the evening before, was of many years standing.

At that time George Manton was engaged at a telegraph office in the north of England. He was then about twenty years of age, and had not yet seen London. His father and mother had been many years dead, and he knew of no living relative but a brother ten years older than himself. His brother Frederick and he worked in the same instrument-room. Frederick, being then thirty years of age, was the chief telegraphist at the station. That was the time when the wires were still in the hands of private companies.

Frederick Manton was not popular among his fellow-clerks, although by a wise subservience he kept in the good graces of his superiors. His brother and he did not get on well together. They lodged in different houses, and met only on business within the business hours. Frederick had not a good reputation among his associates. He was said to be keen, sharp, and unscrupulously avaricious over money affairs. He was known to have a taste for betting on horse races; he played cards for money whenever he had the chance, and some said he was not very nice in his notions of play; a few of his billiard transactions were looked upon as exceedingly doubtful; and, upon the whole, he was not regarded as being strictly honourable or even honest.

On the contrary, his brother George was most highly esteemed by all—his fellow-clerks as well as his superiors. There was not a breath of reproach against him during the whole of the three years he was in that office. And yet George Manton suddenly left that town, carrying with him a name surrounded by ugly clouds which had sprung up in one night.

In the town of Wateringham there was but one telegraph office, which employed five clerks. There were always two, and sometimes three, in the instrument-room. On one particular night George and his brother were on duty. The next day the Wateringham races were to be held. A message of the first importance, connected with the race, was that night read out from the face of the old-fashioned magnetic instrument by George Manton to his brother Frederick. The brother took it down in writing on the usual form, and, as it was about his time to leave the office and no messenger was at hand, he told George he would deliver the telegram himself.

The next day the race took place. When the result of the principal event reached the office, the two Mantons and a third clerk were present. It was Frederick's duty, as senior, to read all the messages as they came in. It frequently occurred that the sender, after handing in the despatch, recollected some correction or alteration which he desired to have made, and the receiving clerk made it if requested. That afternoon, all the messages intended for London respecting the chief event of the day contained alterations in the handwriting of Frederick Manton.

Immediately upon telegraphing the result of this race, the elder of the brothers took a fly to the course and there collected what the people of Wateringham considered a large sum of mony—this large sum of money being what he won on the great race of the day.

Frederick Manton did not return to duty from the course. He drove from it straight to his lodgings, and from his lodgings to the railway station. He took the first train for the south, and he had four hours' start before people at Wateringham knew anything was wrong.

By that time what had really happened at the "big event" had worked round indirectly along the wires to London. London had telegraphed to Wateringham for an explanation. George Manton read off the first disquieting inquiry. He saw it all at a glance. His brother had never delivered that message last night. He had falsified the reports for London in order to gain the few hours necessary for collecting what he had won and making good his flight.

George at that time was young. He was appalled by the crime Frederick had committed, and horrified at the notion that he might be called upon to give evidence against his brother.

That night, the inspector of the district investigated the case. There was no doubt whatever that Frederick had committed the crime; "and," he said, "there is no doubt whatever that you two," addressing George and his fellow junior clerk, "were the innocent tools of this —— scoundrel. There is nothing against either of you. Neither of you did anything even irregular. But, by ——! if the police can catch that —— scoundrel, your brother, I'll swear him into seven years' bed and board, free of expense!"

That night, George Manton wrote out a statement of all he knew of the affair, declaring at the end of the document that he could not bear to appear against his brother; that there was enough evidence for the ends of justice without his, and that he was leaving Wateringham that night and would never return.

The hand of justice had never been placed on Frederick Manton. It was supposed he had got out of the country, or, having spent his ill-gotten money, had made away with his own life. Of course, people at Wateringham, when they found the brother, too, had flown, would not take the telegraph inspector's word for his innocence, and so a cloud of doubt and suspicion had arisen upon George's flight.

But as years went on and the memory of the event grew dim, the name of George Manton had ceased to be associated with the fraud.

CHAPTER VII.

"SWEET INISFAIL."

The fresh air, bright stars, and the cool, sweetening influence of the sea, gradually drove away the languor which the long train journey had produced. Most of the other travellers went below to seek repose in the berths or on the couches. But the two friends still felt they could not sleep. Fitzgerald's mind was alive with eager anticipation of meeting Agnes and the realization of his fondest dream. He had telegraphed to Agnes's father, who lived at Clonmore, saying he was on his way over to see them and take possession of the property which had just become his. Love and the refining influence of the stars, and the great sense of freedom born of the large horizon and the influence of the deep, had wrought upon him and raised his spirit into a fine ecstasy. The obtrusive vulgarity of the everyday world touched him no more. He was conscious of his great love, he felt there was no more love-worthy maiden in all the world than Agnes, and he told himself, with a proud, divine exaltation, that he was no unworthy suitor for her hand.

It was partly the exuberant spirit of youth, and partly the exhilaration of mended fortune, and partly the subdued and subtle influences of the night, that held his soul above the encumbered and perplexing earth. For years he had been in love with Agnes, for years he had tried to get some appointment under Government, which would enable him to be independent of this fortune which he had now inherited. He had been born in the town of Clonmore; he had been brought up there. When he was seventeen and Agnes was ten, he did not know whether he considered her to be a fairy or an angel, but he had then no thought of falling in love with her; he had not even then any of those romantic thoughts and chivalrous aspirations towards her which lads of that age often entertain for the little lasses whom they see now and then, whose beauty is a proverb, and to whom they have never spoken. In a town like Clonmere, which contains less than twelve thousand people, all those of the better class know the names and histories of one another.

From his first recollection Michael Fitzgerald had known Philip Fail as a grey-haired, worn-looking, quiet-mannered gentleman, who lived in the battered square tower known as the West Gate. The only portion of the old defences of the town now standing was this tower, and in the youthful mind of Fitzgerald it had always seemed that the tower and Philip Fail were of coeval origin.

Although it was popularly said that Philip Fail lived in the West Gate, the dwelling portion of his house was a modern structure reared against the side of the old tower.

Mr. Fail was a man of independent means. Upon his marriage, late in life, twenty-two years ago, he had bought with all his money a joint annuity for himself and his wife. He was now an old man with silver hair, not less than seventy years of age, stooped in the shoulders, emaciated, infirm of step. But in all Clonmore no man was more respected; the feeling amounted almost to reverence.

He had frequently been solicited to take part in the public affairs of the town. He had been offered the mayoralty, a seat in Parliament. He had declined both. He had graciously escaped all attempts to draw him from the retirement in which he passed his life. He was always willing to see his fellow-townsmen, and to discuss matters of local or general interest with them; but he would accept no place, attach himself to no party.

His house, which leant against the crumbling old tower, was spacious and handsome for a man of modest means. And in the tower itself, which consisted of three chambers above the arched gateway beneath, he kept books and instruments, the companions and consolers of his comparative solitude. The top chamber of the tower was his favourite resort. Windows had been broken where the jealous old arrow-slits of old pierced the walls. And, sitting in his elbow chair here, the old man could see through the western wall the long, straggling Irishtown leading from the western gate to the open country, or through the eastern wall the broad, busy, main street of the town, which ended abruptly with houses built upon the site of the old Main Guard.

To the house leaning against the old West Gate, Philip Fail, when he was about fifty years of age, brought his bride, the bloom of whose youth was passed long ago, and whom the people of Clonmore considered a confirmed old maid.

After a brief married life, extending to no more than three years, during which time the people of Clonmore came to say that there was no happier couple in the town than old Mr. Fail and his wife, who was no longer young, Mrs. Fail died, leaving the widower a frail, delicate little daughter twelve months old.

The child was reared with great difficulty, and brought through the dangers which beset early life by the exercise of the strictest care and attention. And as she bloomed towards her seventh year into the fresh and joyous health of childhood, her beauty and sprightliness gained her a reputation in the town which grew with expanding time.

From childhood to girlhood she grew, changing in nothing essential. But at the passage from girlhood to womanhood she was threatened and assailed once more by illness. Her life was despaired of for days; and when at last the crisis came, and disease fell back, it left her so pale, languid and fragile that those who saw her said she never would be strong again.

But it happened to be the sweet and wholesome month of May, and as the blossoms expanded on the trees, and the leaves grew greener and greener, and the young corn gathered strength, and the young birds began unseen to chirp in their nests, and the mornings and evenings grew mellower with the longer abiding heat of the sun, and all the land grew beautiful and more dear, Agnes Fail crept slowly back to life and health, and the fear that she would go left those who watched her.

But when the flowers came, and all the gardens of Clonmore were full of perfume and colour—when the wild roses grasped the mounting walls that clung to the steep sides of the hill above the town—and when the mountain streams above the road, not yet shrunken to the narrow limits of summer, took upon their broken fronts the red light of the sun setting beyond the West Gate—Agnes came forth again and walked in the sunshine on the banks of the placid river; but the people who saw her said, "The roses will never come back to her cheeks again; and her light, girlish spirit has passed away for ever!"

Then it was that the people, in whose regard she was dearer than before, followed her as she went with eyes of sympathy and devotion. She was the sweetest maid in all the town, and seemed to the simple folk more than human. There was a soft and tender melancholy in her voice and smile which arrested attention and excited a refined, unspeakable admiration. Then it was that, all the people of the town calling her "Sweet Agnes Fail," some poor poet, who had read little beyond the songs and stories of his country, and never thought of writing any verse at all, called her, in the hearing of a few, "Sweet Inisfail," a name by which she was afterwards ever known among kindly folk of the town, when they spoke of her quietly among themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TELEGRAM TO LONDON.

It was broad daylight when the two friends landed at the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown. They stepped into the train, and in less than twenty minutes were at Westland Row. Here they took a cab and drove straight to the King's Bridge Terminus. They had some time to spare, and Fitzgerald insisted upon their eating breakfast. By the time they had finished, the train for the south was ready to start. They took their places, and in a few moments were speeding away from Dublin at a goodly rate. At the Limerick Junction they changed carriages, the train they had come by proceeding in a south-westerly direction to Cork; the train in which they sat leisurely running south. In the early afternoon the carriages drew up at the platform of Clonmore station. The building was an unpretending one of cut stone, standing about a mile from the town itself.

An omnibus from the South Tipperary Hotel awaited the arrival of the travellers. Into this they got, and were driven along the road leading to the town, and through a few broad, clean streets, to a wide, open place called Marlfield Street, in which the hotel stood.

They alighted, and, having ordered a substantial luncheon and bedrooms, refreshed themselves with cold water and a change of clothes while they were awaiting their meal. Each man seemed careful to avoid any subject of interest. Fitzgerald told his friend a few commonplaces about the town—such as that it returned one member to Parliament; that the cut stone building opposite the hotel was a branch of the most popular bank in the south of Ireland; that down that broad street there, a little to the left, was the Court-house, and beyond that the river; that the barracks were at the eastern, and the lunatic asylum and poorhouse at the western, extremities of the town; that the river was navigable for lighters as high up as the second bridge at Clonmore; that the river did not run in its own bed, but had been diverted; that there were twenty-seven arches in one system of bridges reaching across the whole space of the old and new river beds; that the place had once been famous for its milling industries, and as a corn and butter market; that the old bridge was supposed to have been built by the Danes; that Cromwell had besieged and battered the town, which, when the last charge of the garrison had been expended, was evacuated by night; that there was good hunting and fishing and shooting in the neighbourhood; that many county families lived within short distances of the town; and that the seat of the Indian hero, Lord Gough, was out there, westward, across the vast fertile plain.

Each of these two men had his mind so full of matter peculiar to himself, and was so profoundly interested in this matter, that he could not bring himself to speak of it before action of some kind, or at a time when there was no opportunity for leisurely exposition. Fitzgerald had no radical disinclination to talk of his financial or love affairs, but the only thing he now could give any thought to was his approaching interview with Agnes and her father. His

mind was in a whirl of joyous excitement and anticipation. His own girl was now to be his very own. All obstacles and difficulties had disappeared for ever, and his imagination and joy were perplexed, unable to decide whether they would concern themselves at the moment with the delicious interview which would take place in an hour, or with the calm and satisfying prospect of the future life-long, hallowed union of Agnes with himself.

Manton's thoughts ran in ways widely different. All was gloom and terror and desolation before him. He thought of the wife and child he had left at home, of that quiet, comfortable home itself, and of his own position in the eyes of men. All this was threatened now with shipwreck. If the thing he feared should come to pass, his home would be swept away from him, he would lose the appointment which he held, and, for aught he knew to the contrary, he might be separated from his wife and child for an indefinite time. The immediate future, the coming hour or two, he looked on with positive horror—for in that time he had resolved to seek an interview with the man whose action now threatened him with dire disaster. The remoter prospect was even less tolerable; for all the after time of his life was menaced by the action of that man, and might be destroyed by him.

When luncheon was over, the two men arose, and, having arranged to dine at the hotel at seven that evening, shook hands with grave cordiality and bade each other good-bye for the present.

Fitzgerald ran lightly down the steps of the hotel, turned to the right, and walked rapidly westward.

Manton stood for a while looking out of the coffee-room window, then took up his hat, went into the street, and adopting the line which the omnibus had taken to the hotel, walked with head bent down and slow step towards the railway station.

When he arrived at the little cut stone building by the side of the iron way, all sign of bustle and life had departed. Only seven or eight passenger trains passed through in a day, and these made only four or five events at the station, for the line was a single one, and the traffic so arranged that the up and down trains often crossed here. When no train was expected, the two porters attached to the passenger platforms disappeared, no one knew whither. At odd times the station-master might be seen passing to or from the goods shed; but, as a rule, when a train was not due, or in, the Clonmore railway station was as deserted as an inaccessible piece of beach from which the sea had retired.

The refreshment-rooms were closed up, and there was no sign of life about the place, save now and then when the telegraph boy left the little office on the platform to proceed with a message to town, or was on his way back from town, having performed his mission; or when Edward Pryce, the solitary telegraph clerk, came out to enjoy the sunshine and a pipe, and lounged about upon the platform within sound of the bells of his instrument.

It was close to five o'clock when Manton reached the station. He went in through the door of the booking-office, and then found himself on the up platform, where the telegraph office stood close to the refreshment-rooms.

He looked up and down. There was no one in view but the solitary telegraph clerk, Edward Pryce, sitting outside on the window-sill of his office, placidly smoking a large meerschaum pipe.

George Manton walked slowly up the platform towards the bridge which carried a public road over the metals and closed the platform at that end. There was no train due now until seven o'clock, and except Manton was to be a customer of the telegraph office, or had come to make some inquiry of the station-master, Pryce, who looked at the new-comer with interest, knew he could have no business there.

The door leading into the telegraph office was at right angles to the wall in which stood the two doors of the refreshment-rooms, and from the projecting telegraph office to the wall of the projecting waiting-rooms ran a verandah which shaded from the weather the three entrances. Manton walked leisurely up to the telegraph door, and went into the little office.

When Pryce saw that he was moving to the office he got down off the window-sill, on which he placed his pipe, and followed the stranger through the doorway.

George had been stopped a few feet inside the threshold by a counter and a wire screen through which one saw into the small instrument-room beyond.

Pryce passed through the outer door, through an inner door, into the instrument-room, and, turning round to Manton, said:

"Do you, sir, wish to telegraph?"

Manton bowed an affirmative without speaking.

Pryce handed him a form and a pen.

Manton took both, and wrote:

"George Manton, South Tipperary Hotel, Clonmore: Mrs. Manton, 57, Doncaster Street, London, S.W.—Arrived here, with Fitzgerald, quite safe. Will write you all news by post."

He dried the message on the blotting-paper and handed it in to the clerk.

The latter placed it deliberately before him on the counter, glanced at it for a second, looked up swiftly to Manton's face, and cried:

"You here! I did not recognize you."

"Send off that message," said George, "and then we can have a chat."

Pryce opened the door leading to the instrument-room, and said:

"Come in and sit down; I won't be a minute."

Manton entered, sat on a high stool by the muffled window, while the other man despatched the message.

(To be continued.)

THE ELEPHANT IN THE MIDDLE AGES.—Matthew Paris mentions that the Soldon of Babylon, Malek el Kamel, sent an elephant as a rare present to the Emperor Frederic II., in the year A.D. 1229 (Sir Frederick Madden's edition of the "Historia Minor," vol ii., p. 314). But it was not until the year 1255 that the first elephant was seen in England. This was presented by the King of France to King Henry III. The chronicler, John of Oxenedes, chronicles the arrival of this animal at London, and declares that it was believed that none had ever been brought to England before. Of the elephant, Matthew Paris made a very good drawing, the original of which is still extant among the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum (Nero, D. I.); and an equally good, but smaller, drawing is given by John de Walingeford, in another Cottonian manuscript (Julius, D. VII.). The beast arrived at Sandwich, and was conveyed to the Tower of London, where the sheriffs had been directed by royal precept to build a house for it, 40 feet in length and 20 feet in breadth, taking care to let the building have sufficient strength to be fit for any other purpose. The animal itself was ten feet in height from the top of the back to the ground, and was ten years old. It lived on to the 41st year of Henry III., A.D. 1257, in which year it appears from the "Chancellor's Roll" that for the maintenance of the elephant and its keeper, from Michaelmas to St. Valentine's day, immediately before the animal died, at the age of twelve years only, the charge amounted to £16 13s. 1d. The name of the keeper is recorded to have been John Gooch. Many chroniclers mention this elephant (e. g., Matthew Paris, iii., 334; Annals of Burton, i., 329). The "Majora" of Matthew Paris states (vol. v., D. 489) that no elephant had ever before been seen on this side of the Alps, but that statement will hardly agree with the record of the elephant presented to the German Emperor in A.D. 1229, as already mentioned. Crowds of people went to see the king's elephant, according to this author, and we may well believe it. The drawings seem to indicate an Indian rather than an African elephant.

AN HOUR OF PERIL.

BY F. SCARLETT POTTER.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

MY name is Henry Battersley. My lamented father was a practical philanthropist. His time and means were devoted to relieving the necessities of his fellow-creatures. That he might be near the objects of his care, he took up his abode at the corner of an humble—I may say "slummy"—street in his native town of Birmingham; and there for many years he laboured, doling out his little store to all the penniless who sought his aid—that is, to as many of them as were willing to leave some trifling article in his hands, in proof of their good faith.

Providence blessed his benevolent efforts, and, when in due time he passed to a better world, he left his little capital increased to quite a comfortable sum, for the benefit of me, his only son.

I was then but a boy. The shop was disposed of—for, if you will have it in plain English, my father's business was keeping a pawnbroker's shop—and my guardian so invested the proceeds as to secure me the pleasant little income of £800 a year. My guardian was an old fellow-apprentice of my father, Jacob Jewsbury by name, who was in business in Birmingham, in the same line. He, too, had been a successful man in his way; and when, some twelve months after I was left an orphan, Mrs. Jewsbury went the way of all flesh, he retired from an active life, and retreated, with his daughters, to a compact little residence which he had bought in Worcestershire, at the Lickey Hills.

Thus, Balls' Cottage—for so, possibly that he might be reminded of the sign over the door of his former shop, he had named his rural retreat—became my home in my holidays; and there, so to speak, I grew up side by side with Lavinia Jewsbury, who will be the heroine of this affecting narrative.

Lavinia was the eldest of the daughters of the house of Jewsbury, of whom there were several. She was nearly my own age. She was always looked upon as being clever, and had certainly a will of her own. From the very beginning, she had a way of patronizing me a good deal. I did not object to being patronized by her, for I know that I am not clever, and had always the strongest faith in Lavinia. As I grew older, I looked upon her as the most lovely and gifted of beings.

Lavinia was sent to finish her education at what her father called a "tip-top" school at Edgbaston. From his way of speaking, you may see that Mr. Jewsbury was not a man of much refinement; but Lavinia was refined, there could be no doubt about it, when she came home again. The way she dressed and the way she talked astonished the simple people round Balls' Cottage. She constantly spoke of things being "æsthetic," whatever that might mean. She took to appearing with her hair in a wonderfully touzled condition, and wore dresses, sometimes of the most dismal, nondescript colours, and sometimes tricked out with the most amazing garlands of leaves and flowers of her own embroidering. Old Jewsbury said, with a chuckle, in allusion to this last fancy, he supposed the young women were trying to copy Eve's first dress after the Fall, and he expected that they would next appear in the costume she wore before it, which would come cheaper. But Mr. Jewsbury was a coarse, vulgar man, quite unworthy of such a daughter as Lavinia.

As to me, I admired whatever seemed good in Lavinia's eyes. I was, in my own opinion at least, a man now, and over head and ears in love with her. Nor, inferior as I was to her in taste and cleverness, did I believe Lavinia averse to me.

It had always been settled that we were to make a match of it. My guardian had made up his mind on that point years ago. He knew all about my income, and had younger daughters to provide for.

So, that we were to be married by-and-by was an understood thing; and meanwhile, that I might see a little of the world and its ways, I had taken myself to London, where I amused myself as other young men do who have plenty of money and plenty of time.

Yet I am afraid that London did not improve me so much as Lavinia thought it ought to have done.

"Henry," she said to me one day, when I had run down on a visit to Balls' Cottage—though she, by-the-bye, had re-christened the house, and wished to have it called "The Villa Medici"—"Henry," she said, as we stood in the little garden, which she had planted entirely with sunflowers, on the ground that they were "æsthetic," but which other people said looked a deal too big for the place—"Oh, Henry! why are not you a painter? I do so wish you had artistic tastes! How delightful it would be if you were only an artist, such as one reads about!"

I could only answer that I never was clever enough for that sort of thing.

"But you might develop artistic tastes," replied Lavinia; "and then, living in London as you do, you might make friends among the artists. You might bring some of them down to see us. Oh, how delightful that would be! I should love to know artists—real, live artists—above everything!" and she clasped her hands and turned up her eyes towards the attic windows.

To me Lavinia's slightest wish was law. If I could cultivate the acquaintance of artists, to please her I would do so. When in town, I sometimes dropped into a well-known café, not a hundred miles from Regent Quadrant, to have a smoke and see so much of life as was there to be seen. Among the frequenters of this place were certain young men, who, from the frequency with which they spoke of "jolly bits of colour," "stunning effects," and the like, I concluded must be artists. Here, then, would be my chance of introducing myself to the world of Art.

I must admit that I felt some awe of these mysterious sons of genius, whom even so superior a being as Lavinia could think it a privilege to know. But I might have spared myself this feeling.

That member of their fraternity to whom, in the absence of his companions, I first addressed myself, proved as easy of access as any ordinary mortal. He made no difficulty about smoking my high-priced cigars, and was so condescending as to take other refreshments at my expense. In short, I found him the most affable of men. His name was Mr. Luke Scumbell; and when I gave him to understand that I was a young man of easy means, who desired above all things to know something of the artistic world, he praised my good taste, and assured me of his assistance in carrying out so laudable a design. He could introduce me to many rising men of talent, he said. He was, moreover, a member of a club composed chiefly of distinguished artists; and if I wished it, he would take me to one of its meetings that very evening.

I need scarcely say that I gladly accepted his offer. This was success beyond my wildest hopes.

Returning to my lodgings, I wrote a glowing letter to Lavinia. Alas! how little do we know the future!

I met Mr. Scumbell at the appointed time, and had the satisfaction of finding most of the artists assembled at the club as free and easy in their manners as himself. They were a jolly party. They smoked; they joked; they sang capital songs. In particular, there was one gentleman, addressed as Mr. Wiggles, who, I was told, drew the comic cartoons for "Momus," who was remarkably entertaining. He sang songs and recited dialogues which were, I was given to understand, all of his own writing. He made everybody laugh very much. I, who had never heard anything like it before, laughed more than anybody else. In short, I enjoyed myself immensely—so much so, in fact, that I

["TO TOUCH ME NOW WERE DEATH!"]

have but a hazy recollection of the latter part of the evening.

Mr. Luke Scumbell called on me next day, and found me suffering from a severe headache. No one could have been more kind and sympathetic.

In return, I visited his studio. I bought several of his sketches, which I, of course, sent as presents to Lavinia. She quite gushed over them in her next letter, and declared that she was dying to make the acquaintance of my gifted friend. As I read that letter, I was a proud and happy man—but, as I before observed, we are short-sighted creatures!

Well, the upshot of the matter was that before long I took Scumbell down to the Lickeys, that he might paint Lavinia's portrait. I was more than repaid for any trouble I might have taken by seeing Lavinia's delight. She was in raptures, and thanked me over and over again for bringing so interesting a person—a true artist, she said, to whom she could never tire of talking about Art and the Beautiful. They certainly did talk a great deal together, and I could take but little part in the conversation. But this did not matter; I had given a great pleasure to Lavinia, and that satisfied me.

Scumbell worked daily at the portrait, and, as he and his sitter were thus fully occupied, I saw but little of them. I am of a confiding disposition, and my mind never misgave me that anything could be going wrong; so it was like a thunderclap when one day old Jewsbury came to me, looking very red in the face, and began:

"'Enry" (he always called me "'Enry"), "you'd better take that painter chap off, and look sharp about it. If you hadn't been a fool, you'd never have brought him here!"

"Why, what's the matter, Mr. Jewsbury?" I gasped.

"Matter! The fellow's getting a deal too thick with Lavvie—that's what's the matter;

and there you go, and leave them all to theirselves, and never take a bit of notice how they may be a-carrying on. If you don't want to lose the girl, you'd better pack him off to London again, as soon as you can."

Although I hoped that to Mr. Jewsbury's paternal eyes things might appear worse than they really were, I was sufficiently alarmed. Luckily, the portrait was finished all but a few touches, which Scumbell had himself said could as well be added in his own studio. There was no real reason for his remaining longer. So in course of the next hour Mr. Jewsbury and myself each contrived to receive a telegram. Mine was to call me back to London at once, and his to inform him that his sister and her seven children might that evening be expected to arrive at Balls' Cottage. Under the circumstances, I suggested to my friend that we should immediately make our way to Barnt Green, our nearest station, and take trains for Birmingham and London.

I soon found that Scumbell was in no hurry to go. He declared that in point of scenery, and for painting purposes, the Lickeys were quite equal to anything he had seen in Switzerland; that he MUST finish the sketch which he had begun with Miss Jewsbury; and that he could get a bed at the "Rose and Crown." I began to despair of taking him away. Eventually, however, I carried my point.

After this little alarm, I thought it best, without making any fuss or quarrel, quietly to drop Mr. Scumbell's acquaintance.

The autumn passed into winter, I had seen or heard nothing of him for some time, and I supposed that everything was again in the same state as before I took him to the Jewsbury's. In the beginning of December, I was roused from this false security by a letter from my guardian.

"That painter fellow," he wrote, "has been skulking round here again. He's been stopping at 'The Cock,' at Rubery. He's been meeting with Lavvie, and she encourages him. He turns her head with his talk about art, and all that nonsense. Yet she's a good girl at bottom, and will listen to reason; and I've given her such a setting-down as has brought her to her senses for once. Now, my advice to you is to marry at once, before further mischief is done. That Scumbell has gone to Scotland, where he has took a job of work as will last him some time. Come here directly, and fix the wedding before he can come back to cause trouble. Lavvie is very humble just now, and will do what I think best."

This was the important part of my guardian's letter. I hurried down to Worcestershire at once. Lavinia was, as her father had said, very humble. I had never seen her so subdued before. She had not a word to say about æsthetics. I felt heartily sorry for her, and ashamed of myself, as having been, in some sort, the cause of her trouble.

Old Jewsbury insisted that the marriage should take place not later than that day week; and Lavinia, after vainly urging that her preparations could not possibly be completed till after Christmas, did not finally dare to oppose his wish. As for me, I had little to say or do beyond concurring with my guardian's plans. Everything was arranged to please him; and I went back to town.

I was to return to Balls' Cottage on the evening which preceded the happy day. I had resolved to come from Euston by an express train, which would bring me to Birmingham in time to get on to Barnt Green. A man on his way to be married OUGHT to travel express, whether he has plenty of time on his hands or not—the importance of the occasion demands it!

The short December day was at an end, and the lamps already burning, when I left my cab and stepped upon the Euston platform. Whilst I stood waiting, I noticed near me a person of decidedly striking appearance. He wore a loose coat remarkably long in the skirts, and a slouched hat remarkably high in the crown and broad in the brim, beneath which appeared a quantity of grey hair of unusual length, and a white beard of absolutely gigantic proportions. Little was to be seen of the features, yet, as the lamplight fell upon them, I had a vague impression that they were not altogether unfamiliar to me. But how and where? Possibly I might have dreamed of such a man.

At a little distance was a group of three or four persons in workmen's dress. They were talking among themselves, and took no notice either of me or of the man with the white beard. Yet these faces also, in the same hazy way, struck me as faces that I had seen at some former time. I felt perplexed; but these reminiscences might be mere fancy, and no doubt my nerves were a trifle unsteady at this momentous time.

So far as I knew, the man in the long coat had not before even glanced in my direction; but no sooner had I taken my seat in a first-class carriage than he stepped in after me. The door was at once closed and locked by the guard.

My companion had seated himself on the opposite side, and I at once turned my eyes towards him, with natural curiosity. But not much was to be seen of him. He ignored my presence, and did not once look up; thus his face was completely overshadowed by the big hat. In ten minutes or so we drew up at Willesden Junction; after that, there would be no further stoppage for about an hour, when we should reach Bletchley.

No other person entered our compartment at Willesden, and we were soon in motion again. We had just regained full speed, when, as I was again looking at my queer travelling companion, he slowly raised his eyes till they met mine. He fixed them on me in a steady stare, which he must have continued for some minutes. Then he lifted his right forefinger to the side of his nose, where he kept it.

I had grown uncomfortable under his scrutiny. I got quite nervous; and when I feel nervous I have a trick of scratching my left ear. I raised my hand to perform this involuntary operation.

The strange man was still watching me narrowly.

"Ah!" he now exclaimed, in a deep, sonorous voice. "It is so! There can be no mistake. You have the countersign. They have sent me an assistant for this noble task. Brother in the cause of Humanity, embrace me!"

He rose as if to fold me in his arms, but, suddenly recollecting himself, sank back upon the seat.

"No," he added, "it must not be! Consider that we have embraced as brothers; but do not touch me with a finger: to touch me now were DEATH!"

Completely bewildered by these incomprehensible speeches, I began to stammer out that I had not the pleasure of his acquaintance; but with a wave of the hand, which silenced me, he again broke out:

"Not a word!" he cried; "not a word! Ceremony is needless. We need only to be workers together in the Great Cause! You, then, like me, are prepared to sacrifice yourself in this holy business?"

I said before that I was completely bewildered, as who would not have been by such talk as this? Yet these last words seemed to have some possible connection with the subject uppermost in my own mind—namely, my marriage! To be sure, this man looked like anything but a bridegroom, yet, for all that, he might, like myself, be on his way to be married; and that matrimony is a "holy" business we have the authority of the Prayer-book. So I answered, as best I might, that I was prepared for the step, though it was, of course, a momentous one to take.

"Ha! ha!" returned my fellow-traveller. "Leave fears and scruples to the blinded slaves of habit. WE despise their weakness! WE act in the spirit of sublime heroism!"

"Why, yes," said I. "To look at it in that way, one has the satisfaction of feeling that any sacrifice one makes is for the general good of posterity and the human race."

"My brother, consider that we have again embraced. You have the true spirit of our glorious fraternity. Yet what is that sacrifice which you and I are about to make? It is but a momentary sensation—pop—puff—and the whole thing is over for ever!"

I had begun to see some meaning in the preceding speeches, but this was more puzzling than ever. This was putting matrimony in quite a new light. I hesitated, and, before I could make any answer, he leant towards me and said, in a confidential whisper:

"You know that HE is in this very carriage—in the very next compartment?"

Who could "he" be? My thoughts naturally reverted to Scumbell. If my companion knew my present errand, he might know more about my affairs.

"You don't say so!" I exclaimed. "What has brought him from Scotland so soon?"

"His destiny!" answered my companion, in a hollow voice. "His hour is come, little as his Royal Highness thinks it! He travels disguised as a commercial gentleman in the hardware line; but his movements cannot escape the vigilance of our Central Committee! All is ready for him! Look here!"

He moved his hand towards a black bag which lay beside him on the seat.

"This is crammed to the very lock with dynamite! This" (he pointed to one pocket of his capacious coat) "is stuffed with nitroglycerine! This" (he indicated its fellow) "is fulminate of mercury! Here, there, everywhere" (and he made his long fingers play round the towering crown of his hat and his person generally), "a good padding of gun-cotton! I give myself a slap, and—pop!—we explode; the train is scattered in the form of matchwood over the adjacent landscape; and as to our fellow passenger, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, if they collect and lay in state as much of him as will make a respectable sausage, I am very greatly mistaken!"

With what breathless horror I listened to all this may best be imagined. There could be no question as to his meaning now. This man must be an emissary of the great Nihilistic league! Whilst I had failed to understand him, he had been calmly alluding to his mission of destruction, which, together with the especial object against whom it was directed, was to overwhelm in one indiscriminate massacre myself and all the other occupants of the train. He had mistaken me for an accomplice! My feelings must have been depicted in my face, but whilst he spoke the monster had been too much occupied to heed them.

Now, however, they did not escape his notice. He looked sternly at me, and then demanded, as if some suspicion were newly roused in his mind:

"What makes you turn pale—you who have been chosen to be my helper in this glorious enterprise? Speak, coward!"

"It's all a mistake!" I gasped. "Nobody ever sent me to help you! I don't know anything about your enterprises. I am a respectable man going down to be married! I'll get out of the carriage! I'll stop the train——"

My hand was at the window, but before I could force it down the assassin motioned me with a furious gesture to desist.

"Move from your seat!" he cried, "raise but a finger, utter but the faintest cry, and" (here he made a motion as of bringing his hand heavily on his pocket)—"and I explode, and you are scattered to all the winds of heaven!"

Nothing doubting but that he would be as good as his word, I shrank back, and crouched down in my corner. As I sat there motionless, I every moment became more and more conscious of the horror of my situation. Escape was impossible. To attempt it would bring instant annihilation! At the best it seemed that my remaining time could only be counted by minutes. Any motion of mine must hasten on my fate. Even a few seconds were precious to me, so near to death as I seemed to be. I remained rigid and speechless as a tailor's dummy.

For some minutes—to me they seemed hours—this Guy Fawkes of the rail glared at me in silence. Then he spoke again.

"What!" he began. "Have I been humbugged by a traitor—by a spy? Fellow, you have deluded me with your false countersign and your shifty answers. You are NOT one of us! You have deceived me, and made me disclose our secrets! Yet it matters little. You will never live to divulge them to your employers! Have our whole scheme if you will! Know that the Central Committee of the Friends of Humanity has devoted your Prince of Wales to the same doom as the Russian tyrant! We have long waited for the favourable moment, and it has come at last!"

I gave a groan. It was awful to be reminded of what must so soon be my own fate, and that of all my fellow-passengers!

"Why should we delay the eventful moment?" the monster went on, after a short pause. "All is ready. I now propose that we should explode! One—two——"

He raised both his hands.

"Hold! Stop! Don't!" I cried, in the wildest terror. "Wait a bit! A few minutes—only a few minutes!"

"Weakness!" returned my tormentor, with a grim smile. "Pitiful weakness! Yet he who cannot rise to sublime heroism in the Great Cause of Humanity, naturally prefers to remain A Whole. Young man, I understand, though I do not share your feelings. Be quiet, and I defer the deed till the latest moment. Stir, and you will be instantly dispersed!"

He was again silent. Life, even the very fag end of life, is sweet, and I was resolved to forfeit no scrap if I could help it. I did not venture to utter a word or to move a muscle. I sat trying to think of such things as ought to occupy a man on the verge of eternity. But it was of no use. My thoughts would wander away to Balls' Cottage. I pictured the family circle which there awaited me. I thought how they would listen and listen for the return of the trap sent to meet me at Barnt Green. I thought of the younger girls giggling and tittering and flippantly speculating on the causes of my delay. I thought of old Jewsbury's anger, and the language—not that of blessing—with which he would couple the name of "'Enry" for keeping them from their beds. I tried to think what would be their feelings when the real cause of the delay, and my dreadful end, were known!

How would Lavinia bear the news? I could scarcely expect her to cry her pretty eyes out on my grave, for I knew that nothing worth mentioning of me would be left to be buried. Perhaps she would not weep at all! Was it not more likely that she would simply mourn for me in the most becoming of sable garments, for the shortest possible space that decency would permit, and then marry the perfidious Scumbell? If anything could have added bitterness to my cup of gall, that reflection would have done it.

But the train was being whirled rapidly onwards. Berkhamsted was already left behind; we should soon fly past Tring; more than half our stage was done, and I could not question but that before we were due to pull up at Bletchley the horrible catastrophe would be accomplished. It was a fearful thing to feel that one was being hurried on to such a death! Never shall I forget the agony which I then endured. A pricking sensation about the roots of my hair convinced me that my ruddy locks were turning grey—a result which I had somewhere read occasionally happens to men through sudden fears; but on this point I afterwards found that I had been mistaken.

On we went. Every puff of the engine was bringing us nearer to our doom. A few minutes more and all must be over! I was gazing helplessly at the executioner, who sat silent with half-closed eyes, and as yet made no sign; but, doubtless, his quiet was that of the tiger before taking its deadly spring.

Suddenly he rose to his feet and flung up his arms in the air. This, then, was THE END! Shuddering, I closed my eyes.

But the end did not come. There was no explosion. Again I looked up. The conspirator was still waving his hands above his head, as though merely delaying the act of bringing them heavily on his pockets. At last down they came.

"Don't! don't!" I shrieked. "The nitrogly——"

"Who talks of nitrogly——?" he demanded, sharply. And then, bursting into a loud laugh, he went on: "Who talks of Hanwell and Colney Hatch to a free-born Briton? Away with your padded cells and strait-waistcoats to the winds! I am free! Ha! ha! I am free!"

He plunged his hands into his capacious pockets, and flung out their contents. He tore open his bag and emptied it upon the seat. The wildest imaginable collection was brought to light. With many matters more than I can pretend to remember, there came out Bath buns, penny tracts, blacking, potatoes, Dutch dolls, oyster shells, lumps of coal, old boots, soap, and, lastly, a patent boot-jack and a carving-knife and fork; these latter he clutched and flourished round his head.

He was no conspirator—no Guy Fawkes. I saw my mistake now; my fears on that ground had been needless. But did this discovery bring me any sensation of relief? Far from it! If possible, my terror grew more intense than before, for here was I shut up in an express carriage with a raving maniac and a carving-knife!

Some would have rushed on the madman and tried to wrest the murderous weapon from his grasp. I did not. I had always been given to understand that the proper way to deal with the insane is to soothe and not to exasperate them. I have ever tried to act like a prudent man.

I sat quite still, and presently he grew somewhat calmer. He sat down again. After a while he looked as though he were going to sleep. I began to feel some little hope. If we could only reach Bletchley I might escape. I I thought how wise I had been not to irritate him.

But now, just after we had passed Leighton, a new fancy seized him. He suddenly pushed down the window on his own side, and without any apparent motive, hurled his leather bag through the opening. Then, plucking off his over-grown wide-awake—from the crown of which a pair of socks and an orange rolled upon the floor—and tossing it across to me, the lunatic said, sternly:

"We will change hats."

I felt that my course was to humour him at any cost. I handed over to him my beautiful, new, two-guinea hat, bought only the day before—but what is a new hat compared with one's life?

I must have looked a perfect guy, with nothing above the tip of my nose visible under the brim of that vast sombrero which now overwhelmed my head. The maniac laughed immoderately. He was pleased with the success of his whim. He pursued it further. He flung off his long-tailed coat, and insisted on bartering that garment also. I acceded at once. This was fooling him to the top of his bent.

My hopes grew stronger; and now we were actually slackening speed. A few seconds more and we were beside a platform in Bletchley Station. The platform was on his side. Softly and stealthily I moved towards it. Could I but once open that door, or even raise an alarm, I should be saved.

But, alas! it was not to be. Aware of my intention, my tormentor turned on me a look which sent me back to my place more hastily than I had left it. His next act was to push down the window, and to call softly to the nearest porter.

The man came to our door, and you may judge of my astonishment when I heard my companion, in a loud whisper, calmly inform him that the carriage contained a dangerous lunatic who must be removed. The porter nodded as if he had been expecting some such communication, and signalled to someone else. Three men now walked up; one seemed to be the station-master, the other two, as I afterwards learned, were attendants from a neighbouring lunatic asylum. The official held a telegram in his hand, from which he read:

"'Escaped lunatic in first-class—long, loose coat—remarkable large felt hat.' This is the man, of course."

"No one can question his being the man," said my travelling companion, "who has seen his conduct on the way down, as I have."

I was seized—will it be believed?—seized and dragged away from the carriage. In vain did I attempt to expostulate, to explain, to point out the real madman. When I shrieked that I was sane—perfectly sane, and on my way to be married—quite a roar of laughter burst from the little crowd of lookers-on that had gathered. No one heeded what I said. I was jostled across the platform, and hustled into one of the carriages of an up train which was waiting on the opposite side. In less than ten minutes I and my keepers were being whirled back to town again.

Why need I pursue this painful narrative farther? I did not, as I for some time feared would be my fate, spend my Christmas in Hanwell. I obtained my freedom next day, and once more started for Balls' Cottage. This time I reached it, but it was not to be greeted at its hospitable door by my Lavinia. I had no Lavinia. Lavinia Jewsbury was no more. She had become Lavinia Scumbell.

Need I explain that I had been made the victim of a monstrous hoax by the friends of that perfidious painter? Those workmen on the platform at Euston were some of the smokers and jokers of the club. My companion in the big hat—the conspirator—the maniac—was Wiggles—Wiggles, the funny man of the club. Scumbell had wired from Scotland to his friends to delay the marriage for a day at any cost; and it was at MY cost that they did it.

They had bribed the servant at my lodgings, and learnt the train by which I was about to travel. The telegram to the station-master at Bletchley was their invention. Whilst I was cased in the strait-waistcoat, Scumbell had hurried into Worcestershire and carried off Lavinia. They are married. I am an ill-used man. If ever mortal was entitled to the sympathy of his fellows, I am; yet, to the disgrace of human nature be it said, instead of sympathizing with my misfortunes, my friends all laugh at me.

ORIGIN OF CARDS.—About the year 1390, cards are said to have been invented to divert Charles IV., then King of France, who had fallen into a melancholy disposition. About the same time, is found in the account-book of the King's Cofferer the following charge: "For a pack of painted leaves, bought for the king's amusement, three livres." Printing and stamping being not then discovered, the cards were painted, which made them dearer. By their designs the inventor proposed, by the figures of the four suits (or colours), to represent the four classes of men in the kingdom. By the Cæsars (hearts) are meant the gens de chœur, choorineu, or ecclesiastics. The nobility, or prime military parts of the kingdom, are represented by the ends or points of lances or pikes (and our ignorance induced us to call them spades). By diamonds are designed the merchants and tradesmen. Treste on the trefoil leaf, or clover grass, (corruptly called clubs), alludes to the husbandmen and peasants. The "History of the Four Kings," which the French, in drollery, sometimes call "the cards," is that of David, Alexander, Cæsar, and Charles—names which were and still are on the French cards. These respective names represent the four celebrated monarchies of the Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Franks under Charlemagne. By the Queens are intended Aryme, Esther, Juno, and Pallas (names retained on the French cards), typical of Birth, Piety, Fortitude, and Wisdom—the qualification residing in each person. By the knaves were designed the servants of knights (for knave meant originally only servant, and in an old translation of the Bible Paul is called the knave of Christ). Others fancy that the knights themselves were designed by those cards, because Hogier and Lahives, two names on the French cards, were famous knights at the time cards were invented.

THE READER'S BOOK-MARKER.

ACCOUNT OF THE FRENCH "CHAUFFEURS."

THE robbers' cave in "Gil Blas" is one of those scenes of romance which makes the most vivid impression on the youthful mind, and which retains its fascination in our riper years. Most probably it had its origin in real life; and an authentic narrative of a similar case, in the early part of the French Revolution, appeared in the "Souvenirs de M. Berryer Doyen, des Avocate de Paris."

"In the fourth year of the Republic, as a relief to our discussions before the civil tribunal, we had at Chartres the extraordinary spectacle of the criminal proceedings then directed against the band of 'Roasters' ('Chauffeurs'), known by the title of 'the robbers of Orgères,' who appeared at the prisoners' bar to the number of a hundred or a hundred and twelve. A large church in the centre of the city had been arranged so as to place the whole band at once before the jury. Every morning they were brought from the prison in line to the court, under the escort of the gendarmerie. At their head marched a great red-haired man, on whose face appeared strongly marked the features of villainy; he was the recognised chief of the band, and had been brought from the galleys at Brest to be confronted with his fellow-prisoners, with the witnesses, and with the numerous victims who still survived the cruelties practised on them. The history of these robbers, of the long continuance of their plunder, of the atrocity of their acts, and, lastly, of their arrest, presents something apparently fabulous, even almost incredible, in the state of existing civilization.

"About ten or twelve leagues from Chartres, towards the district of Vendôme, is a vast forest, called the Forest of Orgères. In the most retired and thickest part of this forest, at a very remote period, large quarries had been opened, from which had been extracted the stone used in the construction of the magnificent Cathedral of Chartres. In the course of time, some malefactors had taken refuge in this quarry, and had founded a sort of subterraneous colony which kept up its own population, women having been admitted there. This colony had its mode of government, its police, its rules, adapted to the frightful profession of its members. This profession was a regular system of robbery confided to the individual enterprise of the associates, with orders to effect their purpose, if necessary, by open force, by torture, and even by murder!

"These robbers of Orgères had even in distant provinces emissaries who went on the look-out to mark those isolated dwellings which it was most easy either to surprise or surround by numbers. These the spies marked out to the troop, who, like the Old Man of the Mountain, from the depth of their retreat, directed men to the spot to execute their projects. These wretches generally introduced themselves in the evening, under the most specious pretexts, into the houses pointed out to them, and instantly made themselves masters of the place by binding the labourers and male servants. As for the women, they alarmed them by the most terrible threats, and if they resisted, they bound them, lighted a large fire, before the blaze of which they exposed the soles of their feet, until the violence of the pain had drawn forth the confession of what property their husbands possessed, and had forced them to point out the place where money and articles of value were concealed.

"The repetition of these frightful tortures, in many different places, had given to the robbers, the perpetrators of these cruelties, the name of 'Chauffeurs.' The police had, indeed, succeeded in taking up several of them for thefts committed with violence (housebreaking), and several had been condemned to the galleys, but no one had as yet been convicted of the crime of 'roasting.' Still less had the authorities been able to detect the central cavern in which were collected all the stolen articles which were afterwards sold in the markets near Orgères, where they could not be identified.

"The mystery of the habitual retreat of the robbers, for a long time impenetrable, was, at last, discovered by chance. Two gendarmes of the horse brigade were one day going their rounds in the forest of Orgères, when one of them having occasion to pass a little way into the interior of the high wood, observed a lad, of about ten years of age, so singularly dressed as to attract his attention. He called him to him by a friendly beckon, when the lad, who was suffering from hunger, came forward and asked for bread. The gendarme caught hold of him, and offered him a good breakfast if he would come with him; the boy consented, was mounted behind the trooper, and taken to the nearest inn, where an excellent meal was set before him. While the child gave himself up to the enjoyment of his good cheer, the gendarmes watched him narrowly, and they remarked that he stuffed into his pockets everything that fell into his hands that struck his fancy, without any attempt at concealment, as if the taking everything was the most natural action possible. In a short time, a silver fork and spoon, a knife, a corkscrew, were very openly deposited under the shirt of their little guest. When they asked him why he thus laid violent hands on everything within his reach, his ingenuous answer was that the things pleased him. He gave no other reason, and did not seem to suspect that any other was requisite, nor that he did anything wrong in thus appropriating everything to himself; he said that every day his father brought similar objects to his mother, who found no fault.

"Startled at finding in so young a customer a disposition so perverted, the gendarmes had no doubt that the lad was the child of some malefactor, who had brought him up in some retired corner of the forest. They took advantage of his improvident loquacity, brought out by a glass of wine, to ask him where he lived. They learned that the place of his abode was a vast subterraneous cave, in which were a great many people besides his father and mother; that he had some little comrades who had ill-used him, and that on that account he had run away; that he was very unhappy because his father and mother would not give him all he saw and wished to have to eat and to amuse himself with.

"The gendarmes, calculating from these disclosures that the child of the forest, if he remained with them, might by his disclosures put them on the track of the malefactors who took refuge in these unknown underground retreats, proposed to give the lad every day as much as he liked to eat, and even to put some money in his purse besides, under two conditions: first, that he should no longer take anything but what was given him; and, secondly, that without saying a word to any one else, he should point out to them all the inmates of the cave who were known to him, whenever he met them. They promised him that every time he made a good discovery he should receive the reward of five francs.

"The bargain was soon concluded. The boy was washed, newly clad and shod, his hair well combed, so that he was no longer to be recognised; and thus disguised he was led by his two patrons to the next town, and on market day was placed in ambush, side by side with a woman who passed for his nurse. He pointed out with his finger to his two good friends the gendarmes those of the band whom he was in the habit of seeing every day in the forest, who had come to the market to dispose of some of the articles which had been stolen. As fast as the men were pointed out by him, they were taken into custody, and conveyed to prison.

"These journeys, and these markings-out of the robbers, were repeated in the different public markets in the country; the number of arrests insensibly increased, so that the lad, whose acuteness led to the discovery, got the name of General Finfin.

"It is worthy of remark that Finfin did not include in his informations his father and mother. Now, this exception is rather encouraging, as a proof of natural feeling, however the interest of society might have been forwarded by an opposite conduct. The result of the interrogatories to which the prisoners were subjected, the depositions of witnesses who hastened from all parts, led by the descriptions of the stolen articles inserted in the public papers, was, that the robbers who successively came from the forest of Orgères were none other than the 'Roasters' ('Chauffeurs'), who had laid waste such an extent of country, even at great distances. Many men who were implicated in these abominable crimes, and had been sentenced to the gallows for burglaries, were brought forward to be confronted. At length the ray of truth was cast on this long course of crime, so long in obscurity; or rather, the atrocity of the infamous acts of these wretches was brought forward into full day, with all its hideous and revolting accompaniments. The public indignation was most remarkably roused by the case of three sisters, daughters of a rich farmer, whose house had been broken into by the robbers of Orgères; they had burnt the feet of these unfortunate women with such barbarity that they were reduced, all three, to the necessity of using crutches. The confronting these victims with the perpetrators of this dreadful mutilation was heart-rending. One single verdict delivered society from this scourge, and avenged the crimes of all these monsters. The den in the forest of Orgères was walled up."

SLAVERY IN ENGLAND.—There existed in England, at the Conquest, no free hands, or freemen, who worked for wages; the scanty labour of times warlike and industrious was wholly performed by villains or by slaves. The latter, who composed a very numerous class, equally formed an object of foreign trade for ages after the arrival of the Conqueror, who only prohibited the sale of them to infidels. But the slaves had happily departed from the land before the reign of Henry III. This we may infer from the law declaring, in 1225, "how men of all sorts shall be amerced;" and it (9 Henry III. c. 14) only mentions villains, freemen (though probably not in the modern sense), merchants, barons, earls, and men of the church. Another order of men is alluded to, rather than mentioned, during the same session, whom we shall find, in after times, rising to great importance, from their numbers and opulence; and a woollen manufacture was regulated by the Act (c. 25) which required that "there should be but one measure throughout the realm." During several reigns after the Conquest men laboured because they were slaves. For some years before the statutes for labourers of 1349 and 1350, men were engaged to labour, from a sense of their own freedom and their own wants. It is extremely difficult to ascertain the time when villanage ceased in England, or even to trace its decline. The Edwards, during the pressure of their foreign conquests, certainly manumitted many of their former villains for money. Owing to the previous paucity of inhabitants, the numerous armies, which, for almost a century, desolated the nation, amidst our civil wars, must have been necessarily composed of the lower ranks; and we may reasonably suppose that the men, who had been brought from the drudgery of slavery, to contend as soldiers for the honour of nobles and the rights of kings, would not readily relinquish the honourable sword for the meaner ploughshare. The church and the law, moreover, were not ready in enforcing the master's claim to the servitude of his villains; and, in the progress of events, it was discovered that the purchased labour of freemen was more productive than the listless and ignoble toil of slaves. There were accordingly few villains in England at the accession of Henry VII. A century before, the manufacturers of wool, with their attendant artificers, had fixed the seats of their industry in every county. Like his two immediate predecessors, that monarch turned the attention of the Parliament to agriculture and manufacture, to commerce and navigation.

DREGS AND FROTH.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By A. H. WALL.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I. (*continued*).

A QUIET EVENING, WITH A LITTLE MUSIC.

Ernest looks anxiously into his young wife's face, and a sweet, grateful smile dawns upon it as she recognizes his loving solicitude.

"You want a change of air, I fancy, Clara," says he. "A little of the salt sea-breeze would freshen and brighten us all up immensely. It would do us all good. Do you know, dear, I have never seen the ocean?"

"When Alice and myself were children they often took us to the sea," said Clara. "It was very grand, and must have made a very deep impression on my mind, for many a time, when I have been looking upward dreamily, the sky and clouds have looked like sea and shore; detached bits of white floating in the blue depths have seemed like the sails of distant ships; and as I listened to the rushing noises of the wind amongst the trees, I have fancied myself once more a child beside the sea, asking mamma if dear papa was not coming back to us soon and might not be in one of the homeward-bound, far-away ships we saw on the horizon? That was before we came to the conclusion that he would never come to us again—that he was dead."

"But did you never hear that he was dead?"

"Never!"

"Then he may, for aught we positively know, still be alive?"

Clara shook her head.

"Mamma was quite sure that he would have written to her had he been alive."

"But you had gone away to London. May he not have written to your grandfather and the letter never have reached you?" asked Ellen.

"Mamma left word with her friends, and the Post-office people down there knew that all letters, should any arrive, addressed either to my grandfather or herself, were to be forwarded to an address here. We used often to make inquiries—at first, once or twice in every week—but no letter ever came from him. I cannot think he is alive."

Clara was looking sad again, and therefore,

"Suppose," said Ernest, abruptly changing the subject, "we go to Cornwall. Owen and Mary sadly want us to see their little farm and the children. Shall we go? All four of us. What do you say, Ellen?"

Ellen thought the notion a delightful one, and, in her husband's name, promised at once a ready assent.

"The scenery must be very picturesque—an excellent place for sketching," said Clara, looking lovingly into her dear young husband's eyes; "I should be delighted!"

"The weather's delicious," said Ellen. "You could take your work with you, Erny, and Charley could bring his camera, with some dry plates. I should so like to see the ocean!"

"And we can have Mary, her husband, and the babies for models—it will be quite a good business speculation! We'll go!"

So the trip was agreed upon and settled in this impulsive fashion.

A letter was to be despatched to Cornwall by that night's post, announcing the decision and fixing the date, unless Charley Church, when he came home, should express—what he was not at all likely to have—some objection.

But he, when he heard of it, embraced the idea with fervour, displaying the greatest alacrity in suggesting ways and means, and at once proposing the exact date on which they were to start.

He was a merry, frolicsome fellow; and over their tea he rose, cup in hand, to propose the health of that illustrious artist who had conceived a design at once so complimentary to his head and his heart—which toast was drank right loyally and very merrily, amidst much laughter, with three-times-three, hurrah! and a little one in for the little ones in Cornish land—a nephew and nieces at present unknown, but to whom they meant to be shortly introduced.

The proposition was delightful to them all. It would be the first holiday Ernest had given himself since he began to study art. He and his sister would at last look upon the mighty sea they had so often wondered about in their childhood.

Clara had in remembrance a quaint old book in her grandfather's library, which had strangely fascinated her childish mind. It was a rare sixteenth-century edition of that grand old prose epic, "La Morte d'Arthur" of Sir Thomas Malory, one of the first books printed in English. She remembered that King Arthur was born and died in Cornwall, and that she had often longed to visit the place associated with so great a name.

Genial, light-hearted, blue-eyed Charley, with his short-cut, nut-brown hair, and crisp, closely-curling chesnut beard, told them how he had been to Cornwall with his uncle, who was a shareholder in the Mineral Railway and Harbour Company there; and never was anyone more enthusiastic in praise of its places and its people than Charley was.

"The Cornish folk," said he, "are the most industrious, the most obliging, the most hospitable, the most neat and cleanly, the most simple-hearted and sturdy independent people in Europe; and if they are the real descendants of the ancient Britons, and the ancient Britons were what they are, it's a great pity that the terrible old Romans and the savage old Saxons have not left us more of them. Why, in Cornwall," said he, with an air of delivering a final blow to the last doubt of their superiority, "why, in Cornwall, the meanest servants have so much pride and self-respect that they actually decline to accept tips!"

"Wonderful! most wonderful!" exclaimed Ernest, joining the musical chorus of laughter which the young photographer's enthusiasm produced.

Did I tell you, by-the-bye, that Charley Church was a photographer? If I have not, I should have done so. He has a studio in London, "very handsomely fitted up for the reception of visitors," now "supplied with every requisite, scientific and artistic, for the production of first-class works in every department of the art." At least, so say his advertisements.

After tea, the young couples take out their chairs and sit upon the lawn, where the evening breeze, laden with perfumes of plants and flowers, toys caressingly with their hair, as if with unseen hands, and gently touches their faces with fairy kisses—cool and chaste and softly loving. Ah! how tenderly fresh and still and peaceful it is, with the stealthy shadows silently closing in upon them under the whispering trees, and above them a gorgeous canopy of sunset glory, deep and pale gold and yellowish greens and violets, changing into deep grey-toned blues above and misty purples below, solemn and grand, past all expressing!

Charley's talk was still about Cornwall, and he found eager listeners. He told them about its mines, and its eighty thousand or more workers underground; of its rocky coast and its wild romantic beauties; of its fishermen and women; and of the hundreds and thousands of hogsheads of pilchards they sent to market every year. He grew learned about the commerce of Carthage, when the Phœnicians traded with the Britons of Cornwall for tin long before the birth of Christ, and spoke of old-world Greek, Hebrew and Roman merchants who came to its iron-bound coast to trade. He told them exciting stories of rebellions in Cornwall, when the stalwart, undismayable rebels, who so persistently demanded a reason why, were so awkwardly and perseveringly troublesome; including that story of the unhappy Cornish mayor, who, being instructed to erect a gallows in the market-place by King Edward's grim and cruel Provost Marshal, Sir Anthony King, did so, and was sent from his own dinner-table to swing by the neck from it by order of the very man he was then hospitably entertaining.

While he talked, the air grew cooler and the darkness shut them in, and the maiden moon came forth amidst her myriads of lamp-bearing handmaidens, the stars.

And then Clara's soft, sweet, earnest voice was heard quoting from memory Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," and Charley said he remembered going to Camelford and seeing the place where they told him King Arthur was born. It was not far from some mighty slate quarries—"a wild, outlandish place up amongst the big hills, where the fragments of a once mighty castle called Tintagel are still to be seen—a wonderful place!"

"That," said Clara, deeply interested, "was where his mother, the fair Igraine, who was so cruelly deceived by Merlin's magic, died, and where the Knights of the Round Table were first created. A famous place, indeed! Oh! how I would like to see it! Did you go to Tretown, Charley?"

"No. Ought I to have gone there?"

"Why, of course! Don't you know it was there that the terrible battle was fought between Arthur and Mordred?

> When all day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea;
> Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
> Had fall'n in Lyonness about their lord.

What a pity you didn't see Tretown! You were close to it at Tintagel. More than one famous battle, too, was fought there. I have read somewhere that the place where King Arthur was treacherously slain is called to this hour Slaughter Bridge. How curious that the glorious king should be deceived just where his mother was deceived, and killed almost on the very spot where she died and he was born! I wish you had seen Slaughter Bridge."

"Never mind, Clara," said Ernest, pressing her hand. "Possess your romantic soul in patience but a little while and you shall see it yourself, and, moreover, you shall read to us there from the 'Idylls of the King.' I'll bring it home to-morrow."

"Don't be too sure of that," said Charley. "It isn't the easiest place in the world to get at, I can tell you."

Clara was still full of the subject, and told them how Sir Gawaine's ghost warned the king on the fatal day of his death not to fight, and how on the night before the king had a terrible dream of being in the midst of serpents, and of hideous black depths opening under his throne, filled with foul and horrible creatures, who seized upon his limbs, inflicting such agony that he cried out in his sleep, to the great terror of his faithful knights, squires and yeomen.

"I wonder what he had for supper?" asked Ellen, demurely, whereupon arose cries of "Shame!"

Then went up into the solemn quietude and gloom the loud voice of one who pompously proclaimed to the breathlessly-listening universe the pregnant fact that Clara Benny, late Grant, was there and then ceremoniously and officially made "laureate of the battle-fields of Arthur the king and of his Table Round," on the forthcoming grand occasion of a state visit to the royal duchy of Cornwall.

And so, chattering and laughing in merry mood, the happy four retired to supper, after which sounds of music and singing floated out through the open French windows, and the sweet voice of Clara was heard in an old-world ballad full of tender and pathetic feeling, no longer faltering and feebly low, as it had been in the streets, but strong, loud and clear, with a pure, bird-like ring in its notes, and better still, a bird-like impulse of freedom, happiness and grateful love in the heart from which it emanated.

But these pictures of domestic happiness and enjoyment are apt to grow monotonous, and are too unexciting for most novel readers. Let us close the chapter.

CHAPTER II.

HOME FROM AUSTRALIA.

O who would trust the world, or prize what's in it,
That gives and takes, and chops and changes, every minute?

QUARLES.

"THIS is better than bush tea and damper," smilingly said Mr. James Ronald Grant to himself, as he sat down to a luxurious breakfast in "The Ship," at Greenwich, an open window beside him overlooking the busy river, the morning early bright and warm, but cloudy.

He is a tall, square-shouldered man, with a thin, brown, care-worn face. His grey eyes, half-concealed under heavily-drooping lids, have an expression of deep melancholy in them, and his big, tawny beard is plentifully besprinkled with white. With an aspect of dreamy thoughtfulness, he partook of his meal, looked at his watch, and then drew his chair nearer the window, observing absently the boats and vessels, but turning sharply every now and then to listen, with his eyes upon the door of the room, as if he expected a visitor.

Mr. Grant has recently returned from New South Wales, where, in actively developing the mining wealth of the colony, he did well for his country and well for himself; for he is now one of the largest ship-owners in Sydney, and one of the chief shareholders in several flourishing colonial coal and other mining companies.

It was of earlier wanderings and campings out in the deep gullies and watery creeks of his exploring days that he was thinking, when he sat down in the morning sunshine and said to himself, as above recorded: "This is better than bush tea and damper."

And he was right; it was considerably better, to say nothing of occasional accompaniments to bush tea and damper, such as black snakes, hideous centipedes two feet long, brutal bushrangers and wild cattle, perils of death by thirst and hunger, perils by flood in crossing bridgeless rivers, and perils of slaughter by savage blacks, or slimy, foot-long, treacherous leeches, and stings of mosquitoes, and—more seriously dangerous than these—eye-attacking sand flies!

It is good to stretch your limbs in that comfortable room, after that comforting meal, Mr. Grant, and, while basking so safely in the sunshine, to remember these things in a succession of dream-like images, and to think, with a sigh: "After all, there's no place like home!"

Presently the expected visitor is announced, and Mr. Grant turns to him with a very marked expression of eagerness and anxiety. After the usual salutations, he asks:

"Well! Any news?"

"I think not," says the new comer, a stalwart, sharp-eyed, intelligent-looking man, in a tweed suit. "The clue seemed to end in Gower Street, after I had tracked them from Ipswich to London. I have found nothing since. You see, sir, it's so long ago, people forget. A friend of mine, in the same line as myself, tells me that a lady applied to him a little more than two years ago to discover the whereabouts of a Mrs. and Miss Grant, natives of Suffolk. She gave him several addresses to which she had herself traced them, but these he had not preserved in his books, and now he doesn't remember them. All he knows is that he didn't succeed."

"What was the lady's name?"

"She declined to tell him."

"Did he describe her?"

"Yes—tall, thin, and pale, with beautiful large brown eyes, very interesting and graceful looking. Came in a carriage, with servants in livery."

"Did she visit him often?"

"Yes; seemed, he said, terribly anxious about them, as if she were a sister, or a daughter, or something of that sort."

"What will you do now?"

The private detective looked puzzled, and, shaking his head, confessed that he was at a loss.

"You have advertised, you say, sir?"

Mr. Grant slowly shakes his head.

"My daughters are self-deceived, or have been cruelly deceived by others. They do not know me, and would not respond to any appeal made in that way and in my name. I must see them, or write to them privately. What do you propose doing?"

The detective shrugs his shoulders, and, in a tone of despondency, says:

"We are still examining the records of marriages and burials; but you see, sir, the name is not an uncommon one, and that sort of work is awfully slow and expensive."

"Bah! cost is nothing. The Post-office Directory has given you no clue?"

"None at present."

After a short silence the detective brightens up with a new idea.

"I'll tell you what I'll do, sir: we'll advertise for your heirs, as if you were dead, you know, and they could claim your property. That'll fetch 'em!"

A look of pain and terror darts into the father's thin, brown face; he says, bitterly:

"You think an appeal to their mercenary feelings would be stronger than an appeal to their affection for a father! If I thought so, the business between us would soon be at an end, Mr. Richards; I would return to Australia to-morrow and never give a thought to them again! But," he added, in a lower tone, "I don't think so—remembering their dead mother, I can't!"

The detective smiled as the tears sprang into his client's eyes, and he looked into his hat with the air of one who saw before him a soft-hearted, sentimental fool.

With a mixture of wonder and contempt peeping out in the tone of his voice, he began:

"Come, now, sir, there's nothing so bad in it, after all; we're all fond of money naturally, and it's only natural to come forward and claim what you believe legally belongs to you. Why, anyone would do it like a shot! They'd be disappointed a bit at first, perhaps, when they found out you was still alive, but you could see them and explain matters, sir, and then, don't you see, sir? it would soon come straight. Why, lor', sir, only look at the——"

The argumentative ex-policeman would have proceeded advocating his plan and reasoning down Mr. Grant's tender scruples if the latter had not stopped him with an impatient gesture of his hand, saying:

"That plan, Mr. Richards, is quite outside my views. Pray, don't mention it again. If I do advertise once more, it will be in a straightforward and very different way."

"In the Agony Column, I suppose," says Mr. Richards to himself, scornfully. "And much good that'll do!"

For he was annoyed that Mr. Grant should reject so brilliant and soundly practical an idea.

"I shall be away for a week, Richards. Any communications you may have for me can be sent to my solicitor."

Mr. Richards nodded and laughed, saying:

"I know, sir—Mr. Wedderburn. Ah, sir! he wouldn't be the man to let sentiments stand in his way where money was concerned. Did you ever hear the story they tell about him and the great City alderman, Sir John Weeldon?"

Mr. Grant had not heard the story, so Mr. Richards, previously accepting his client's offer of something to drink, proceeded to tell it.

"Mind, sir, I don't know how true the story may be, but I know both the alderman and the lawyer, and all I can say is, that it isn't unlikely—leastways, in my fancy. It was some years before they made an alderman of him. Mr. Wedderburn was at Sir John's house on business one afternoon, and they asked him to stop to dinner. Well, he does so; and when he sent in his bill, blowed if he hadn't put down in it all the things as he'd had to eat and drink at that dinner—every blessed one of them! as thus—to eating the wing of a fowl, so much; to drinking so many glasses of dry sherry and a pint of cliquot, so much; and so on. At first, Weeldon thought it was a joke; but Wedderburn meant it, and he made him pay, too. The dinner occupied his time, you see, sir, and a lawyer's time is money all the world over, isn't it, now?"

Mr. Grant laughed and confessed the fact, as most men will.

"But that isn't all, sir. Weeldon set up a counter-claim. He charged the lawyer for his dinner and wine, and, by Jove, sir! he made him pay for it!"

Mr. Grant laughed again.

"Good!" said he.

"But the best's to come, sir," said the chuckling detective, smacking his thigh with one hand. "Old Wedderburn wasn't to be done. 'W isn't to be had by W, so I'll trouble you again, W,' says he; and what do you think he did? Why," said Mr. Richards, with a burst of triumphant merriment, "he summoned Sir John for selling wine without a license, and got him heavily fined!" He added gravely, after a pause, with a sudden touch of professional caution: "At least, that's how the story goes!"

They both laughed over the anecdote, and soon after, outside in the street, parted—Mr. Grant going for a meditative stroll in the glorious old Park, Mr. Richards to his office in Bridge Street, Blackfriars.

CHAPTER III.

LITTLE JEMMY BENNY HAS A VISITOR, AND HEARS GOOD NEWS.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight—
Huge were those dreamers now!

LITTLE JEMMY BENNY, absently contemplative of that most familiar of prospects, "over the way," stood at the low, narrow door of his little lop-sided shop, near the Great Fire's monument. And behind the half-glass door looking into the shop, Polly was diligently spreading a snow-white table-cloth over the three-legged round table, preparatory for dinner.

Up and down the hilly street no one was visible but Mr. Benny and a policeman, who, leisurely passing, gave him good morning, and, pleasantly smiling, exchanged a few words about the weather, before he passed on to encounter in the next street a tall, thin, brown-faced, tawny-bearded man, who enquired if he knew a shopkeeper in that neighbourhood named James Benny.

Being directed, Mr. Grant, for he it was, speedily reached the shop he was in want of, and, stepping down into it, found its owner behind the counter, to which he had retreated on seeing a supposed customer approaching.

On hearing that he was Mr. James Benny, the visitor produced a large, bulky pocket-book, and gave him from it a letter in the well-known handwriting of his son William — who, you may remember, with Harry and Jane Benny, went to Australia, where the brothers became farmers.

"I happened to meet your sons, some years ago," said Mr. Grant, "and they are now two of my best friends. They were amongst the last people I visited before I sailed for England. They asked me to see you, and gave me that letter."

Mr. Benny glanced with quick interest into the stranger's face, thanked him, put on his spectacles, opened the letter, glanced over it rapidly, and, folding it up, exclaimed joyously:

"Bless my soul!"

Then, begging the stranger's pardon, with gleeful delight beaming from his face and spectacles, he hurriedly opened the small half-glass door, crying, in a great state of pleasurable excitement:

"Do come in, sir! pray come in — their mother'll be delighted, sir; so pleased! Here, Polly! Polly! here's somebody from Australeyer —a genelman as knows our Bill an' Harry an' Janey. Of course, you knowed Janey, sir?—ha! ha! ha! you couldn't know one on 'em without knowing the other, could you, sir? Bless my soul! She's a good gal, is Janey! Only to think, now! All the way from Australeyer! Take care, sir! two steps down—that's

it. Excuse my apron, sir. Well now, this is a surprise—this is a pleasure, isn't it, Polly? isn't it, my dear? Ha! ha! ha!"

As full of gleeful eagerness, surprise, and pleasure, Polly came forward to welcome the friend of the dear boys and girl so far, far away. She shook hands with him as if he were the dearest, most deeply respected, and oldest friend she had in the world. She inspected him as curiously as if he were some rare animal from a newly-discovered region. She uttered little exclamations of delight and astonishment at frequent intervals while he spoke—exclamations which went off with a succession of loud pops like champagne corks—in the irrepressible effervescence of her motherly feelings. To talk with one who had not long before talked with those dear ones whom she had not seen for so many long years was something wildly extraordinary—something indescribably joyous—to this full-hearted, affectionate little old creature, and her true and tender little old husband.

Presently they were seated, and the dinner was altogether forgotten. They laughed and talked, and were as familiar, and as free from reserve or restraint, as if Mr. Grant had been known to them and they to him for more years than they really had minutes. He told them how the rosy-cheeked, bright-eyed English lads had become great, stalwart, Australian men, with brown faces and big beards; and how the little pink-and-white sister had bloomed into a portly, matronly woman, who kept house in a way that was the envy of all good housewives in their neighbourhood. She had received no end of offers of marriage, but had determined to remain single as long as ever her brothers needed her services, and with such a sister—as Bill and Harry said, and as the girls of their acquaintance said, but in a tone vastly differing from theirs—what did they want with wives?

"And yet," said Mr. Grant, with a smile of sly meaning, "I know what I know; and don't you be surprised, Mrs. Benny, if some fine day not a hundred years hence you receive a little mite of awfully stale wedding-cake, with an echo of wedding-bells hanging about it, and a letter that will be all orange-blossoms and bridal veils, and full of that sort of commonplace, every-day nonsense which we old folks are too familiar with to be at all excited about—eh, Mrs. Benny?"

At this the laughing chorus was so noisy, long and joyous, that a customer in the shop had to rap with a penny-piece at the little glazed door, and so loudly that it was a wonder the glass wasn't broken, before she could attract attention.

Mr. Grant had knocked about amongst all classes and conditions of men in the Australian wilds, where the veneer of civilization was most apt to crack and warp and peel away, leaving the bare timber of humanity in all its beauty or ugliness, its strength or weakness, as the case might be. He had ceased to regard distinctions of rank and class as implying any real distinctions beyond those of the least importance and the most artificial and frivolous nature. He had known horny-handed sons of toil, to whom an extra sixpence a week had been a God-send, display, on becoming the plutocrats of Australian society, characteristics of the noblest and highest natures. And under the very influences which made them what they were, he had seen the soft, white-handed, pampered darlings, blown away from the upper froth of society and sent to Australia to make their fortunes, sink into the vilest and most worthless of human dregs—dissipated, lazy, mean, and vicious, and, without courage or daring, selfishly and recklessly desperate. He had seen the wives and daughters of the poor play the parts of ladies better than some who regarded them with scorn as the scum which should be dregs. He had seen fortunes made and retained, and made and lost; and he had studied in the men and women who rose and fell so rapidly how unfit some of the one class were to retain what chance only gave them, and how wisely fitted by nature some of the others were to avail themselves of all those opportunities which their industry and intellect created or directed.

Mr. Grant looked, consequently, under the outer seemings of men and women, and recognized human worth in every garb.

Mr. and Mrs. Benny were already in his estimation diamonds of the purest water; his heart warmed to them. This visit was doing him good; it kept his sympathies in a salutary state of vital warmth.

"Shall I tell you," said he, "how it was that I first met your sons and their sister Jane? It's rather a long story, but I think you'll like to hear it."

The little old father and mother exclaimed with one voice that nothing could please them better. So they drew their chairs nearer together and to him, and Jemmy, looking absently into the visitor's thin, brown face, clasped the bony, wrinkled hand of his wife in his own (after he had taken off his spectacles to wipe a tear from them and put them away), and squeezed it tenderly from time to time as the story progressed.

And then Mr. Grant, touched by these unaffected tokens of loving tenderness upspringing from the depths by their parental affection, cleared his voice a little and began his tale:

"Few men were so unlucky as I was directly after I landed in New South Wales. I had the education of a gentleman, where it was the least valuable of human possessions, in a pecuniary way. I was a stranger and friendless. I had a profession which depended largely upon influential friends, or the means of winning them, and I had no more money than would provide me with the barest necessities for a couple of months or so. There was nothing very cheerful in that look-out, was there, Mr. Benny?"

Mr. Benny intuitively shook his bald head, although just then he was thinking too deeply of his own boys and their sister Janey to clearly grasp what the stranger was saying.

"Moreover," said Mr. Grant, very mournfully, "I had left behind me a wife who was dearer to me than life, and two little daughters."

Mrs. Benny looked into his face with an expression very like his own; it was so pitiful. The visitor continued:

"It was at a time when they were making one of the latest railways, and I had just experienced the first gleam of returning prosperity in the form of employment in its construction. I had been sent on to a place called Wingleton. Ah, Mr. Benny! you can have little idea of what railway projecting is out there in the bush. Without roads, without guides, cutting the tracks as you go, under a broiling sun; it's killing, cruel work! One day, when, with gigantic efforts, over and over again repeated, at last, in utter despair, we had succeeded in getting our heavy dray to the top of a steep green hill, there we found ourselves dead beat. Our best horse was dead—a splendid mare—killed herself in a desperate effort to do our will; the bullocks were exhausted and unable to move; the broad, strong wheels were gradually sinking deeper and deeper in the treacherous grass-grown soil! After a longish rest, and some refreshing food and drink, we renewed our efforts. Swarms of carrion-crows were cawing above us, sailing slowly round and round above the still warm carcase of the plucky little mare, which was already sheathed in a black, shining, ever-moving mass of insect life—flies! Ugh! We contrived presently, after making prodigious efforts, to reach a bit of ground where it would, as we thought, be safe to encamp."

"Had you got Bill and Harry with you, sir?" anxiously asked Mrs. Benny, putting a question which had been in her mind all the time he was speaking.

Grant smiled at their secret impatience (it reminded him that he was not the hero of his own story), and, speaking more rapidly, he replied: "No, not at first; but, luckily for us, they turned up afterwards," and went on:

"Our place of encampment commanded views of a dense forest not far away, a vast level plain of thick grass from five to six feet high, looking like a sea as the wind swept over its great hollowing waves, bounded by distant hills and mountains, and intersected with a broad river and some narrow streams. It took us hours to clear away a lot of this grass, by cutting in some parts and burning in others, so as to leave about us a good wide, open space—as black with ashes as we were with smoke—as a precaution against bush-fire; and it took some time to make our provisions safe, hobble the cattle, boil the kettle, and so on. But at last everything was done, the meal was over, the darkness coming on, and we took to our cushions, skins, and rugs for a good night's rest. I was just dosing, when there came from the forest the loud, shrill, swelling sound, ending in something between a yell and a shriek, which we colonists call a cooey. Said I, drowsily, 'There's somebody lost in the bush.' I was beginning to arouse myself, when the wild cry was repeated. Then, throwing off the rugs, I stood up and cooeed back a reply. It is no joke for a poor fellow to be lost in the bush, I can tell you. Presently, in a great state of excitement, two young men rode hurriedly into our midst, their horses steaming and with bleeding flanks. They were your sons—William and Harry—God bless the noble lads! We received them suspiciously at first, with fingers on the triggers of our revolvers, for they were armed to the teeth. They told us eagerly that they came from a farm some miles beyond where we were, near the border of Queensland, to warn us that an attack would be almost directly made upon us by a large party of the savage blacks, headed by some noted bushrangers, their objects being drink, murder, and plunder. Harry said there was no time for them to get aid and bring it on to us, for the bloodthirsty ruffians and savages had got the start of them, so they came alone, and their sister—a girl worthy such brothers—had bravely mounted another horse and rode away alone, as hard as she could gallop, to seek help at the nearest out-station. As quickly as possible, we did all we could to strengthen our poor means of defence, but the war-painted fiends gave us little time of preparation. They were in the thick grass, not twenty yards away, before we discovered them, and then, with wild howls and shrieks that made my blood run cold, they were upon us!"

As they listened, with parted lips and breathless interest, Jemmy drew inwardly a long, shivering breath, and Polly, with knitted brows, raised her hands in a gesture of shrinking terror.

"Spears and revolvers, clubs, tomahawks and rifles, had it all to themselves for a while. The cowardly bushrangers gave the blacks the worst part of the danger, and dearly they paid for the privilege. It was awful work; and I thank God that neither before nor since have I seen anything like it!"

"Were they hurt, sir?" anxiously inquired Polly, all the mother in her eyes.

"We were all more or less seriously hurt, my dear Mrs. Benny; and one of us, a poor lad of sixteen, was killed on the spot. Still, however, wounded, bleeding and nearly exhausted, as we were, our foes were still kept at bay, and only just long enough. When our friends' cries were heard in the forest, the enemies were startled, and we were re-invigorated; but if they had reached us ten minutes later—well, then, I should not be here telling you the story of our lucky escape. And now, my dear friends, I want to say this—and I want you to pay particular attention to it—to your two brave sons——"

"Bill and Harry!" said Jemmy, proudly.

"And your noble daughter——"

"Janey!" nodded the gratified Mrs. Benny.

"I owe a debt of gratitude which it is impossible I can ever pay—which, indeed, I never hope, or even wish, to pay; but as they risked their lives for mine, and as I am not likely to have the chance of doing that for them, I am but too anxious to do what I can, either for them or for those who are dear to them—whether it be here in smoky London, under the good old city's great Monument, or so far away as Australia, amongst the inmates of Monument Farm, near the borders of Queensland. If ever I can be of service to you, you'll think of that, will you not?"

Jemmy and Polly had a very vague idea of what he meant in making this request so earnestly,

[AFTER TEA, THE YOUNG COUPLES TAKE OUT THEIR CHAIRS AND SIT UPON THE LAWN.]

but, as they saw that it would give him pleasure, they readily promised to do so.

And then they plied him with questions thick and fast. How were the boys looking? Had they got sweethearts? Were they good boys, sober boys, hard-working boys? And were they well-doing boys? And did they go to church? Did they ever talk about them? And did Janey seem happy? Were their cattle thriving? And was it so very dreadfully hot there? And was it true that over there it sometimes rained without ceasing for weeks together? And so on, and so on, question after question in endless succession.

And then he had to tell them what sort of a farm it was that had been named after the great Monument, and in honour of their old home; to tell them of the huge gum-trees under which their house stood; to explain that it was made of wood —American pine-wood—and had to be repaired after a gale, just like a ship after a storm; that it had an open verandah built round it, with posts and saplings and lattice-work covered with gigantic rose-trees, the buds and blossoms of which mingled with passion-flowers and other beautiful creepers—a mass of gorgeous colours and sweet odours; that all the windows had boxes of mignonette before them, and that a fruitful vine overspread the great wide wooden porch; that the roof of the house, and even the chimneys, were concealed by a rich growth of water-melons; and that altogether it was more like a fairy bower than a commonplace farmhouse. He told them, too, that the farm was measured by miles instead of acres, and that the cattle on it were numbered by hundreds!

It quite took the old couple's breath away to hear of so many wonders.

"Your children are doing remarkably well, as I am most happy to tell you," said Mr. Grant; "and if you and all the rest of the Benny family will join them, there is quite room enough for you, or soon would be, and I am commissioned to pay all the expenses of your emigrating. Call a family council and talk it over, and let me know. I am staying at 'The Ship,' at Greenwich."

It was nearer the Bennys' tea than dinner-time when their visitor wished them good-bye, they had so many questions to ask, and he had so much to tell them.

The pie in the oven was as hard as wood and as black as charcoal before Polly remembered it, and took it out with a very comically doleful, "Just look at that, Jemmy!"

Some few days after this agreeable visit, Mr. and Mrs. Benny received a long letter from Australia, in which William, Harry, and Jane (one always wrote in the name of all) spoke of Mr. Grant in a way which puzzled them exceedingly. If their recent genial visitor from the Antipodes had been—as he certainly said he was—commissioned to pay the expenses of their emigration, why did their sons write as follows?

"By the time you receive this letter he (Mr. James Grant) will be sure to have called upon you. He is a man of great wealth and influence. Everybody likes him. He is one of the cleverest men in this country. To us he has been a genuine benefactor and a most faithful friend, and it is principally due to his many acts of kindness that, in a year or so, if you all like to join us, we shall be able to send you the money to emigrate with, and say, with all our hearts, —'COME, AND COME QUICKLY.' We have got more bush land now than we can clear, and but for that keeping us back, we should have been able to invite you all to join us long ago. But now the land is improving so fast, and we are so fast increasing its area of cultivation, that soon all will be right. So get ready. We often wish Mary and her husband were out here; with his knowledge and experience of farming, he would do grandly. We have just told him so again, in a letter which goes out with this. If we cockneys, knowing as much about agriculture as we did of the moon, have got on so well in our farming, how would he do? Oh! you darling old father and mother, what a jolly old time we'll have when once more we are all together! We are always talking about you, and, although dreaming seems rather out of our line (we sleep so soundly), when we do dream it is sure to be of the old folks at home, and the dear little old shop on the hill, with that great, tall sentinel, the Monument, keeping watch over it up in the mist and smoke, with the sunrise on its head of golden flame, for that was how we saw it last on the morning we bade you good-bye, now so long, long, very long ago!"

(To be continued.)

THE ROBIN.

TRUE, Mary! 'tis a shaded hour,
And friends are falsely flown;
Affliction's darkest tempests lower,
And thou art left alone.

But thou can'st cheer the gloomy way,
And share the sorrows, too;
Ah! 'mid the beams of pleasure's day,
I ne'er thy value knew.

So, Mary, when the feathered quire
Are wildly warbling near,
The robin's tones we scarce desire
To join the chorus here.

But when, 'mid winter's bleakest hours,
These minstrels chaunt no more,
And leave the lonely woodland bowers,
So musical before—

Then to my desolated cot
The robin speeds his way,
And shares my hearth, my food, my lot,
And charms me with his lay.

THE secret of deceiving men is not in satisfying their desires, but in planting new desires in their soul.—MASSILLON.

THE WITHERED BRANCH.

A ROMANTIC STORY OF THE WELSH COAST.

By the Author of "Walladmor."

CHAPTER XIX.

LOST IN THE SNOW AND MIST.

Bertram was aware that the most favourable step to the establishment of his own innocence would be to disclaim all voluntary participation in the late rescue by surrendering himself again to the officers of justice.

Yet he could not but feel that to retrace his steps to Ap Gauvon was a matter of peril or impossibility under any state of the weather; and at this moment the threatening aspect of the sky, over which a curtain of clouds was gradually dawning, combined with his own weariness and craving for rest to urge him onwards upon the route pointed out by Nicholas.

There was no time for long deliberation. The moon, in a deep gulf of the heavens, sank from sight beneath the thick pall of clouds which was fast closing over it.

With growing anxiety, Bertram started off hastily in the direction of the stone. This he reached without much difficulty, took the right turning, and hoped soon to arrive at the peat-ditch which formed the second point in his carte du pays.

After walking, however, for a longer time than seemed requisite for traversing the distance, he began to fear that he had wandered from the track. He turned, grew anxious, diverged a little to the right, and then again to the left, in hopes of coming upon the object he was in search of; then turned again; and finally lost all knowledge of his bearing or the direction in which he had come.

Mounting a little rising ground, he beheld the abbey of Ap Gauvon, apparently two miles distant, still reddening in the angry glare of the fire. Torches, too, were evidently being carried there, sometimes gleaming over the outer walls, sometimes flashing from the windows of upper battlements—a proof that the police officers had not yet renounced all hopes of recovering their prisoner.

This spectacle did not tend to restore him to his self-possession. He descended the hill in trepidation, and, on reaching its foot, anxiously considered what it would be best to do.

At this moment, the touch of something light, wet and cold, falling upon his face, struck a deadly chill to his heart. He hoped he might be mistaken, but the next instant came a second, a third, a fourth, until the whole air was filled with snowflakes.

Raising his head at this time, he beheld the moon, at an immense altitude above him, shooting down her light through a shaft as it were in the clouds; the slender orifice of the shaft contracted; a sickly mist spread over the disk of the luminary. Scarcely a moment after, all was gone, and one unbroken canopy of thick, dun clouds muffled the entire hemisphere.

In this perplexity, what was he to do? From the hill, which he had just descended, he remembered to have seen some dark object, apparently about half a mile distant. This might be a hovel or small cottage, and in this direction, therefore, he determined to run.

The snow was now at his back, and the dark spot soon began to swell upon his sight. In five minutes he came up to it. He felt about for door or window, but could find none; and great was his disappointment when, upon more attentive examination, he perceived that what he had mistaken for a place of shelter was the antique stone gallows which he had passed in the afternoon. Under the lee of this old monument of past days he was seeking out a favourable spot for a temporary shelter from the violence of the storm, when, to his sudden horror and astonishment, up started a tall,

[HER SHRILL VOICE STILL, AT INTERVALS, FORCED ITS WAY TO HIS EARS.]

female figure, and seized him eagerly by the arm.

At first she seemed speechless from some strong passion, and shaken as if by an ague fit, but in a few moments she recovered her voice, and with piercing tones, in which—though trembling with agitation—Bertram immediately recognized those of poor Gillie Godber, she exclaimed:

"Ah, Gregory! is it you? Are you come at last, my darling? I have waited for thee—oh, how long! Four-and-twenty years I have wept and watched, and watched and wept. Oh, come with me, my boy, my boy! God's curse on them that ever took thee away! Turn to me, my son. Oh, come, come, come, come!"

With the energy of a maniac she flung her withered arm about his neck; but Bertram was so overcome by the sudden shock of surprise, and by mingled emotions of awe, pity, and distraction of purpose, on finding himself thus suddenly in the arms of a lunatic, that he tore himself violently away and ran off without asking himself whither.

The poor frantic mother pursued him, with outstretched arms and her aged locks streaming upon the wind, crying out continually:

"Gregory, my love! turn back! The wind is high and stormy; the snow-flakes are driving, driving, driving! I have kept a fire to warm you in Anglesea for four-and-twenty years. Turn back to me, my bonny lad! my love! my darling!"

Her powers were unable to support her in this contest of speed with the energies of a young man suddenly restored by the excitement of panic; and, on looking back within half a minute, Bertram perceived that her figure was already obscured by the tumult of snow which raged in the air.

Her shrill voice, however, still at intervals forced its way to his ear, flying in the very teeth

of the wind and contributing to aggravate the distressing circumstances of his situation.

It was a situation, indeed, which might have shaken the fortitude of one more accustomed to struggle with danger. The clouds had now lost their colour of yellowish dun, and assumed a livid lead colour, which contrasted powerfully with the white livery in which all things were already arrayed. The snow flakes, conflicting with the baffling wind as they descended, "tormented all the air," and, to the eye of one looking upwards, seemed to cross, thwart, and mazily interweave with each other, moving as rapidly as a weaver's shuttle, and with the lambent, scintillating lustre of fire-flies.

The plashes, or shallow pools of water, which were frequent in this part of the heath amongst the excavations from which peats had been dug, now began, under the weight of a man and the sudden breaking up of the frost, to give way beneath their warm covering of snow. The wind, which was likely to subside as the fall of snow grew more settled, at present blew a perfect hurricane; and, unfortunately, the accidental direction which Bertram had taken on extricating himself from the poor mad woman—a direction which he was unwilling to change from his fear of again falling in with her—brought him into direct opposition to it.

To these disheartening and bewildering circumstances of his present situation were added those of previous exhaustion, cold, hunger, and anxiety in regard to the probable construction of the share he had borne, as a passive spectator, in the events of the day; having, however unintentionally, become a party, in the eye of the law, to the attack on the revenue officers, and, possibly, as he feared, to that upon the police officers at Ap Gauven. Under all these circumstances of distress, however, he continued to make way, but more and more slowly; and at length, whilst bending his head before the blinding drift of snow, he plunged unawares into a peat trench. He found himself up to the shoulders in water, and with some difficulty crawled out on the opposite bank.

This, which under other circumstances might have been regarded as a misfortune, now turned out a very serviceable event; for the sudden shock of this cold bath not only communicated a stimulus to the drooping powers of his frame, and liberated him from the sleepy torpor which had been latterly stealing over him, but, by urging him to run as vigorously as he could in order to shake off the extreme chill which now seized him, tended still more to restore the action of his animal powers.

A reviving hope, too, had suddenly sprung up that this might be the peat trench to which the directions of Nicholas referred; and he ran with alacrity and cheerfulness. In this course, however, he was all at once arrested by a violent blow on his temples.

Raising his head, which he still carried bent down against the wind, to his sudden joy he discovered in the cause of his rude shock a most welcome indication of approach to some beaten road, and probably to the dwellings of men. It was a lofty pole, such as is ordinarily erected upon moorish or mountainous tracts against the accidents of deep snow.

Bertram's hopes were realized. At a little distance he found a second pole, then a third, and a fourth, etc., until at length he dropped down upon a little cluster of cottages. He saw, indeed, neither house, nor tree, nor hedge before him; for even a whole village at such a time—its low roofs all white with snow—would not have been distinguishable; but he heard the bleating of sheep. Seldom had his heart throbbed with such a sudden thrill of gladness as at this sound.

With hurried steps he advanced, and soon found a low hedge, which, without hesitation, he climbed. He felt the outer wall of a house, but could not find the door. Close to the house, however, was a wooden barn, from which issued the bleating which had so much gladdened the poor wanderer; and to this he directed his steps.

Many a reader, when he runs over this chapter by his warm fireside, or possibly in summer, may laugh. But whosoever, led by pleasure or necessity, has in winter roamed over a heath in the Scotch Highlands, and has been fairly mist-foundered, knows what a blessed haven for the weary and frozen wayfarer is a reeking sheepcote.

To his great delight, Bertram found the door of the barn only latched. Without noise, he opened it just wide enough to admit his person, and then, closing it again cautiously, climbed over the great hurdle which barricaded the entrance.

Then he groped along in a stooping posture, feeling his way on the ground, as he advanced, with his hands; but, spite of all his precaution, the sheep were disturbed. They fled from him bleating tumultuously, and crowded to the furthest corner of the barn.

Much greater was his alarm, however, when all at once he stumbled with his hands upon a long, outstretched human body. He shrank back with sudden trepidation, drew in his breath, and kept himself as still as death.

But, observing by the hard and uniform breathing that it was a man buried in profound sleep, he stepped carefully over him, and sought a soft and warm bed in the remotest corner of the barn. Luckily, he found means to conciliate the aboriginal tenants of the barn, and in no long time two fleecy lambs crouched beside him; and he was forced to confess that after the fatigues of such a day no bed could have been more grateful or luxurious.

CHAPTER XX.

A TREACHEROUS GUIDE.

On awaking the next morning, Bertram perceived by the strength of the light, now brightened by reflection from the dazzling snow, that the morning was far advanced; and, rising hastily from his bed of heath and fern, he was somewhat startled to perceive a whole family of women and children standing at a little distance and surveying him with looks of anxious curiosity, checked, however, and disturbed by something of fear and suspicion. These feelings appeared a little to give way before the interesting appearance of the youthful stranger. An expression of pity arose for the distress which could have brought him into that situation; and in a few words of Welsh, which were rendered intelligible to Bertram by the courteous gestures which accompanied them, he was invited into the house and seated by a blazing fire of peat and wood.

With the cheerful hospitality of mountaineers, his fair hostesses proceeded to prepare breakfast for him, and Bertram had no reason to complain of any coldness or remissness in their attentions. Yet, in the midst of all their kindness, he could not but discover an air of lurking distrust which somewhat embarrassed him. This appeared the more reasonable as he became aware that the woman and children were left almost to their own protection; for the house was in a lonely situation, and all the men of the family were abroad, except an imbecile greybeard whom one of the young women addressed as her grandfather.

The children, in particular, he remarked, regarded him with eyes of dislike, and rejected all his advances. Happening to follow them to the door for a moment, he there observed what threw some light upon the case. The children were mourning over the body of a dog which lay dead in the corner of a little garden; and, from the angry glances which they directed at himself, he no longer doubted that they regarded him as the destroyer of their favourite. It was peculiarly unpleasant to lie under the reproach of an act which, unless it were a necessary act, was a very savage and brutal one, at a time when he was indebted to the goodness of the family for the most hospitable attentions.

At this moment a sudden recollection darted into his mind of his nocturnal companion in the barn, to whom he doubted not the death of the dog was to be attributed.

Unable, however, from his ignorance of the Welsh language, to explain this circumstance or to make his own vindication, he prepared to liberate himself from the uneasy and humiliating situation in which he now found himself placed by taking his leave as soon as possible.

At this moment an ill-looking fellow, who seemed to have some acquaintance with the family, entered the cottage. He fixed his eyes keenly upon Bertram, and, when the latter rose to depart, offered himself as a guide to Machynleth.

Bertram had noticed his scrutiny with some uneasiness and displeasure; but having no ready excuse for declining his offers, nor, indeed, seeing any use in doing so, he said that he would be glad to avail himself of his services. Taking his hat, he bowed to the family with as much composure and as obliging an air as his embarrassed feelings would allow, and moved towards the door.

On this there was a general murmur amongst the women, and a sudden stir, as if from some wish to detain him.

Their looks, meantime, expressed compassion. Bertram discovered no signs of any hostile intention; and, as he was unable to imagine any reason advantageous to himself which they could have for detaining him, he persisted in departing.

The day was beautiful; but the roads were heavy and toilsome to the foot-passenger, for the snow lay deep, and frost had succeeded just sufficient to glaze the surface into a crispness which retarded without absolutely resisting the pressure of the foot.

Their progress was, therefore, slow; but they had floundered on between two and three miles, and as yet Bertram had found no cause for openly expressing his dissatisfaction with his guide. The manners and deportment of the man were, indeed, unpleasant. His head he carried in a drooping posture; he never looked directly in Bertram's face; and now and then he eyed him askance. Occasionally, he fell behind a little; and once, upon turning suddenly round, Bertram detected him in the act of applying a measure to his footprints.

These were alarming circumstances in his behaviour; but otherwise he was civil and communicative in his replies, and showed a good deal of intelligence in his account of the different objects on the road about which Bertram inquired.

All at once, however, he was missing; and, looking round, Bertram perceived him, at the top of a slight eminence a little to the left of the road, waving his handkerchief and whistling a loud summons to some person or party in the neighbourhood.

"Ah, rascal!" cried Bertram; but, before he could complete the sentence, his attention was drawn off to a party of horsemen who now wheeled into sight and rapidly extended their line—manœuvring their horses with the evident purpose of intercepting him, if he should attempt to escape.

This, however, if it had been feasible, was no part of his intention. Judging from their appearance that they were police officers, he advanced to meet them with a firm step, calling out at the same time:

"Take notice, I surrender myself voluntarily; the magistrates, I have no doubt, will consider my explanations satisfactory, and all I have to regret is that anyone should have been wounded in an affair connected in any way with myself."

This he said on observing, in the person of one who rode foremost, the "virtuous" Mr. Sampson, carrying his arm in a sling. Mr. Sampson, however, replied to this indirect expression of condolence by a sceptical and somewhat satirical grin.

"Do but hearken to him," said he to the other constables; "hearken to this pious youth: we, that are honest men now, are not so religious by one half. And he can satisfy the magistrates! Ay, no doubt; but first he must hang a little—hang a little, do you hear, sir? But pray, Kilmary, how came you to let him move off till we got up?"

"He wouldn't stay," said Kilmary, in whom Bertram now recognized his guide; "nothing would content him, but off he must bolt; and

the farmer's people would not help me to keep him. Nay, I believe they would have hid him, or let him out at the back door, if he hadn't killed their old dog last night. I palavered to them about the laws and justice and what not; but they wouldn't stand it."

"Faith! and I can't blame them," said Sampson. "It's no joke for a lonesome family on a heath side to make an enemy of such a pious youth as our friend here."

"Well, bind him fast and keep him better than you did the last time; for I shall hardly catch him for you a third time. It was no such easy matter to track him, I'll assure you; his footmarks were half snowed up."

"Ay, Kilmary, thou art a good hound for running down a fox. To give thee no more than thy due, thou art a hound in everything—a perfect hound!"

"But no hound that will fetch and carry for others, Mr. Sampson! If I'm always to be the hound to hunt the fox home, I'll have my right share of the reward."

"You shall, Kilmary—a hound's share! A bone or so when his master has dined; eh, my boy?"

Kilmary muttered a few inarticulate words, and slunk behind. Meantime, the constables dismounted, and, having handcuffed Bertram, passed a cord round his body, the two extremities of which were carried in the hands of Sampson and another, who remounted their horses, and led him after them in this felonious style.

Fortunately for Bertram's comfort, Sampson's wound obliged him to ride slowly; notwithstanding which, he was heartily thankful when, after advancing for some hours, they came in view of the church-towers of Machynleth, distant about three miles, and found Alderman Gravesand, with a barouche-and-four, waiting for them at the top of the hill.

Bertram was placed in the carriage, and Sampson took his place by his side, Kilmary mounting Sampson's horse. By this time it was four o'clock, and Alderman Gravesand directed the whole party to push forward at their utmost speed. "It was his intention to carry the prisoner to Walladmor Castle, nearly thirty miles distant, and he wished to be through Machynleth before the light failed."

"Would his worship, then, go through the town?" asked Sampson. "Might it not be better to send forward with orders for horses to meet them on the outskirts, and avoid the town by making a little circuit?"

"No." This proposal the alderman rejected, as he would have done any other which looked like a compromise of the magisterial dignity or a concession to the popular spirit. Mr. Gravesand was a man who doated on what he called energy and vigour; others called it tyranny and the spirit of domineering. Upon the present occasion he was resolved to parade his contempt for "the jacobinical populace" of Machynleth by carrying his prisoner boldly through the midst of them.

The fact is, that the populace of Machynleth were not jacobinical, nor ever showed any disposition to insubordination unless in behalf of smuggling (which on this coast was a matter of deep interest to the poor man's comfort), or in cases where Alderman Gravesand was concerned.

The Lord Lieutenant, whom they loved and reverenced, could at all times calm them by a word; and any inferior magistrate who would take the least pains to cultivate their good will, was sure of finding them in all ordinary cases reasonable and accessible to persuasion. But for Alderman Gravesand, who had never missed an opportunity of expressing his hatred and unaffected contempt for them, they were determined on showing him that there was no love lost between them; right or wrong, in every case they gave him as much trouble as they possibly could. And in the present case, which was supposed to be an arrest for some participation in the smuggler's affair of the funeral, they had one motive more than was needed to sharpen the spirit of resistance to the worshipful gentleman.

CHAPTER XXI.

A VAIN ATTEMPT AT RESCUE.

Rapidly as the magisterial party moved, the news of their approach had run before them; and, on entering the north gates of Machynleth, they found nearly all the male population in the streets. Large bodies of smugglers were dispersed in the crowd, many of whom saw clearly that the magistrate was in a mistake as to the person of his prisoner; but they had good reasons for leaving him in his error. Up to the inn-door, where it was foreseen that the carriage would draw up to change horses, no particular opposition was offered to the advance of that or its escort. Hisses, groans, curses, and, indeed, every variety of insult short of manual violence, continued to rise in stormy chorus all the way to the inn-door. But the attack, which was obviously in agitation, waited either for the first blow to be struck by someone more daring than the rest, or for some more favourable situation.

Just as the carriage stopped, an upper window was thrown up, and forth came the head of Mr. Dulberry, the radical reformer, in a perfect panic of exultation. This was the happiest moment of his existence. No longer in mere vision or prophetic rapture, but with his bodily eyes, he beheld the civil authority set at nought, insulted, threatened, and a storm rising in which he might have the honour to preside and direct. He was suffocated with joy, and for a minute found himself too much affected to speak.

Whilst he was yet speechless, and distracted by the choice amongst ten thousand varieties of argument and advice for the better nursing of the infant riot, a drunken man advanced from the inn and laid himself across the street immediately before the feet of the horses which were at this moment harnessing to the carriage, loudly protesting that they should pass over his body before he would see them carry off to a dungeon so noble a martyr to the freedom of trade.

Alderman Gravesand directed the constables to remove the man by force.

This fired the train of Dulberry's pent-up eloquence. He "adjured the mob by those who met at Runnymead to resist such an act of lawless power; applauded the heaven-born suggestion of the drunkard; called upon them all to follow his example; by Magna Charta every Englishman was entitled to stretch himself at length in the mud when and where he would; and at the alderman's peril be it, if he should presume to drive over them."

Meantime the constables had seized the man and tossed him into the gutter.

So far the system of vigour seemed to carry the day. But either this act or the urgency of the time (the horses being now harnessed and the postillions on the point of mounting) was the signal for the universal explosion of the popular wrath. Stones, coal, brickbats, whizzed on every side; the traces of the barouche were cut; the constables were knocked down; those of them who were seated in the carriage were collared and pulled out, excepting only Sampson, who, being a powerful and determined man, still kept his hold of Bertram.

The alderman, who was the main cause of the whole disturbance, was happy to make a precipitate retreat into the inn, at an upper window of which he soon appeared with the Riot Act in his hand.

At this crisis, however, from some indications which he observed below of the state of temper in regard to himself just now prevailing amongst the mob, he thought it prudent to lay aside his first intentions; and, putting the Riot Act into his pocket, he began to bow, most awkwardly attempted the new part of gracious conciliator, expostulated gently, laid his hand on his heart, and endeavoured to explain that the prisoner was not arrested for any offence against the revenue laws, but for high treason.

Not a syllable of what he said was heard.

At the adjoining window stood Mr. Dulberry, labouring with a zeal as ineffectual to heighten and to guide the storm which the alderman was labouring to lay.

Like two rival candidates on the hustings, both stood making a dumb show of grimaces, rhetorical gestures, and passionate appeals, blowing hot and cold, like Boreas and Phœbus in their contest for the traveller; the one striving to sow, the other to extirpate, sedition; the reformer blowing the bellows and fanning the fire which the magistrate was labouring to extinguish.

Fortunately, perhaps, for both, and possibly for all the parties concerned, arguments were now at hand more efficacious than those of either. At this moment a trampling of horses was heard, words of command could be distinguished in military language, and amidst a general cry of "The red coats! the red coats!" a squadron of dragoons was seen advancing rapidly along the street.

The mob gave way immediately, and retired into the houses and side alleys.

Just as the dragoons came up, a bold fellow had knocked the wounded constable backwards, and was in the act of seizing firm hold of Bertram, when the commanding officer rode up, and with the flat of his sabre struck him so violently over the head and shoulders that he rolled into the mud, but retained, however, presence of mind enough to retire within a party of his friends.

In a few minutes the officer had succeeded in restoring order. He now took the prisoner from the carriage and mounted him behind a dragoon. His hands, which had been hitherto tied behind him, were for a moment unfettered, passed round the dragoon's body, and then again confined by cords.

These arrangements made, the whole cavalcade, accompanied by two constables, drew off at a rapid pace to the city gates.

Under this third variety in the style of his escort, Bertram began to experience great fatigue and suffering. Without any halt, or a word spoken, the cavalry proceeded at a long trot for two hours along a well-beaten road. On reaching a wretched alehouse, however, necessity obliged them to make a short halt and to take such refreshments as the place afforded. To the compassion of a dragoon Bertram was here indebted for a dram; and he was allowed to stretch himself at length on the floor of the house and to take a little sleep. From this, however, he was soon roused by the jingling of spurs, roughly shaken up, and mounted again in the former fashion behind the dragoon.

It was now dark; a night storm was beginning to rise, and it appeared to the prisoner as though the road was approaching the coast. The air grew colder and colder, the wind more piercing, and Bertram, whose situation made all change of posture impossible, felt as though he could not long hold out against the benumbing rigour of the frost. So much was his firmness subdued, that he could not forbear expressing his suffering by inarticulate moans.

The dragoon who rode before him was touched with compassion, and gave him a draught from his rum flask. The strength given by spirituous liquors to a person under the action of frost is notoriously but momentary, and leaves the sufferer exposed to an immediate and more dangerous reaction of the frost. This effect Bertram experienced. A pleasant sensation began to steal over him; one limb began to stiffen after another; and his vital powers had no longer energy enough to resist the seductive approaches of sleep.

At this moment an accident saved him. The whole troop pulled up abruptly; and at the same instant a piercing cry for help, and a violent trampling of horses' hoofs, roused Bertram from his stupefaction.

The accident was this: A trooper had diverged from the line of road, and was in the act of driving his horse over a precipice which overhung the sea-coast just at the very moment when his error was betrayed to him by the moving lights below. The horse, however, clung by his fore-feet, which had fortunately been rough-shod, to a table of slanting rock glazed over with an enamel of ice, and his com-

rades came up in time to save both the trooper and his horse.

Meantime the harsh and sudden shock of this abrupt halt, together with the appalling character of the incident which led to it, had awakened Bertram; and he was still further roused by the joyful prospect of a near termination to his journey, as well as by the remarkable features of the road on which his eyes now opened from his brief slumber.

The road, as he now became aware, wound upwards along the extreme edge of the rocky barrier which rose abruptly from the sea-coast. In the murky depths below he saw nothing but lights tossing up and down, gleaming at intervals and then buried in sudden darkness—the lights, probably, of vessels driving before wind and weather in a heavy sea. The storm was now in its strength on the sea-quarter. The clouds had parted before the wind, and a pale gleam of the moon suddenly betrayed to the prisoner the spectacle of a billowy sea below him, an iron barrier of rocky coast, and at some distance above him the Gothic towers and turrets of an old castle running out, as it were, over the sea itself upon one of the bold prominences of the cliffs. The sharp lines of this aerial pile of building were strongly relieved upon the sky which now began to be overspread with moonlight. To this castle their route was obviously directed.

But danger still threatened them. The road was narrow and steep, the wind blustered, and gusty squalls at intervals threatened to upset both horse and rider in the abyss. However, the well-trained horses overcame all difficulties; at length the head of the troop reached the castle, and the foremost dragoon, seizing a vast iron knocker, struck the steel-plated gate so powerfully that the echo on a more quiet night would have startled all the deer in the adjacent park for two miles round.

(To be continued.)

I do not merely admire women, says an American author, as the most beautiful objects of creation, or love them as the sole sources of happiness; but I reverence them as the redeeming glories of humanity, the sanctuaries of the virtues, the antepasts and pledges of those perfect qualities of the head and heart combined with external and attractive charms, which, by their union, almost exhalt the human into the angelic character.

Power of the Imagination.—Well-known cases are on record where imagination produced sickness and even death without any real disease. In epidemics imagination, exciting fears, often multiplies the number of fatal cases. Sir Walter Scott was fond of telling a story, where the facts came within his personal knowledge. A timid man was persuaded that the ground over which he was walking was full of adders. He was greatly alarmed, and soon thought he felt one in his boot. He struck violently at the boot with a stick in his hand to kill the reptile. As he struck hard, he was certain he heard the adder hiss, and, excited almost to terror, he kept pelting away at the boot till the ankle was sore from the pounding. Stopping at last from sheer exhaustion, and listening, he said, "Ah! now he is silent. I think I have done for him," and pulled off his boot. What was his surprise and chagrin at finding that the adder was his watch, which had slipped down into the boot, and that the breaking of the spring was the only hiss he heard. It may be hoped that he learned a good lesson, and did not yield again to idle fears without inquiring if there was any real occasion for alarm. Another illustration is afforded by the following incident of recent occurrence: Two convicts in the California State Prison took delight in torturing a timid fellow, whose cell was between their own, by pretending at night that they saw ghosts. They talked to each other about it, describing the most awful sights, and counterfeiting excessive fright. A week or two of this treatment drove the victim crazy, and he really imagined he was haunted by the very creatures which they conjured up.

THE HOUSEWIFE.

GOLDEN RULES.

There are a few golden rules of housekeeping which every woman ought to always bear in mind:—

Be cleanly, be regular, and never suffer an inferior article to come into your larder—poor ones are always the dearest in the long run.

In making coffee, clear it with isinglass, and not with eggs; and serve with it, in addition to the ordinary jug of boiled milk, a small pitcher of cream.

Do not cover jam, except with rounds of tissue-paper, dipped in brandy and pressed close upon the top of each pot. If the preserve has been properly made—that is, equal weights of sugar and fruit, and boiled sufficiently—it will keep well for twelve months without being what is termed "covered down;" of course, we mean provided it be kept in a dry place.

Broil steak without salting, as salt draws the juices; and cook over a hot, clear fire, turning frequently with tongs.

Beef which has a tendency to be tough can be made tender by stewing very gently for two hours, with pepper and salt, letting out about a pint of liquid when done, and allowing the remainder to boil into the meat. After taking up, make gravy of the liquid saved. If your cooking fire is slow, throw on a little salt—it will help it very much.

In making pastry, do not spare butter; and let it be of the very best.

In icing cakes, dip your knife frequently into cold water.

Orange Fritters.—Stir half a pound of flour to half an ounce of butter, add the yelks of two eggs and milk enough to make a batter that will drop from a spoon. Beat thoroughly, and add half a saltspoonful of salt and the whites of two eggs. Peel and cut oranges in thin round slices, using a very sharp knife. Dip the slices in sugar, and then in the batter, and fry in hot lard or clarified butter. Pineapple fritters may be made in the same way, cutting the slices of pineapple into triangular pieces, and soaking them in wine if you wish.

Plain Bread Pudding.—Cut stale bread into slices, butter them, and lay them in a pie-dish; sprinkle them with a little brown sugar and a few currants. Repeat this until the dish is quite full; then pour on the bread boiled milk mixed with one beat-up egg, until the bread is soaked; bake it a light brown.

Scotch Shortbread.—Half a pound of flour, half a pound of sugar, half a pound of butter; the butter and sugar to be melted together, and then the flour dredged in.

Potato Rissoles.—Work into cold mashed potato a beaten egg, a little butter, pepper, and salt. Make into egg-shaped balls; roll in beaten egg, then in pounded cracker, and fry in hot lard or dripping to a light brown. Drain well in a colander, and serve in a hot napkin-lined dish.

Apple Charlotte.—Put into a well-buttered pie-dish a layer of finely-grated bread-crumbs, then a layer of apples, pared and cut as for a tart, and a little sugar; then another layer of bread-crumbs, and so on until the dish is full, taking care to have a layer of crumbs at the top; bake nearly an hour, turn out of the dish, and strew sifted sugar over. The pudding should be covered during part of the time of baking.

Coffee Cake.—Beat up the yelks of four eggs, quarter of a pound of powdered loaf sugar, and gradually two ounces of flour and two ounces of potato flour; lastly, the whites of four eggs, whipped to a stiff froth. When the whole is well mixed put it in a buttered plain mould and bake. Turn out the cake when done, and when it is quite cold cover it evenly all over with the following icing, ornamenting it with piping of the icing pushed through a paper cone. This last operation must be done with care, lest the heat of the hand warm the icing. When the cake is finished, it should be put in a cold place or on ice till the time of serving. The icing: Take a quarter of a pound of fresh butter and a quarter of a pound of powdered loaf sugar, beat them to a cream in a bowl, adding, drop by drop, during the process, half a teacupful of the strongest coffee that can be made.

Onion Soup.—Take half a pound of nice fresh butter, put it into a large saucepan, and let it melt slowly, but not brown at all. Cut up very finely ten good-sized onions, put them into the melted butter, dredge in a little flour, and let the onions stew slowly for fifteen or twenty minutes, stirring them occasionally. Then pour in one quart of boiling water, dredge in a little more flour, and mix all well together. Add a teacupful of sweet milk and boil for fifteen minutes, stirring often. Beat up the yelks of two eggs, and after the soup is taken from the fire stir them in rapidly for a few minutes. Serve with bits of toasted bread in the tureen. Season with salt and pepper, but not till just before taking up, as the butter will nearly salt it enough.

Superlative Orange Wine.—To ten gallons of water put 28lbs. of loaf sugar and the whites of six eggs. Boil them together for three-quarters of an hour, keeping the liquor well skimmed all the time, and pour it hot into a tub or large pan, over the peels of fifty Seville oranges. When it is nearly cold, take three spoonfuls of yeast spread over a piece of toasted bread, and put into the liquor to make it ferment. After it has stood two or three days, pour it from the peels into a cask with a gallon of orange juice, which takes about a hundred and twenty Seville oranges. Let it remain in the cask until the fermentation has ceased. Endeavour to proportion the size of the cask to the quantity, as it must be kept filled so as to work out of the bung-hole. When the fermentation is over, draw off as much of the wine as will admit one quart of brandy for every five gallons of wine. It will be fit to bottle off or drink from the cask in four or five months. This wine, if carefully made, according to these plain directions, will be found exquisitely delicious, and, if kept four or five years, would be found to surpass most of the best foreign wines as they are usually sold in England.

Fine Potted Beef.—Take four pounds of tender, lean beef, and one pound of fine streaky bacon, two ounces of lump sugar, and half an ounce of saltpetre. Let them lay twenty-four hours in a pan, seasoned with a little finely beaten mace, white pepper and common salt; then cut the meat in small pieces, put it in an earthen pot with six ounces of butter, and place it over a moderate fire for three hours, stirring it so as to prevent its burning. It must now be taken out, and should there be any outward hardness, cut it off, and beat the remainder in a marble mortar, adding a little mace, pepper, or salt, according to palate, with six ounces of clarified butter gradually mixed in. The whole being pounded exceedingly fine, must be put into pots, pressed closely down, covered over with clarified butter, and kept in a dry situation. Veal may be managed in the same manner. The convenience of having such articles as potted beef, and other ready-dressed provisions always in the house, is much greater than might be imagined, particularly to those who are frequently obliged to return home fatigued at uncertain hours.

To Pickle Red Cabbage.—After cutting the cabbage in the usual manner, put it in a baking-dish, and sprinkle a good handful of salt over it; let it stand for twenty-four hours, and draw the salt and water well from it; the cabbage must then be put into a stone jar, adding a sufficient quantity of the very best vinegar cold, with ginger and allspice. The ginger and allspice must be first boiled in about a quarter of a pint of the vinegar, all of which is to be put into the jar. This will be found not only very crisp, but of a very beautiful colour, and ready for use in a fortnight or three weeks.

A DISGRACE TO THE FAMILY.

By PHILIP H. HEMYNG.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

CHAPTER I.

LOVE AMONG THE ROSES.

An old-fashioned English rosary. Roses on the right, roses on the left, roses all round; and the sweetest flower of all, the lovely girl who was engaged, on the June morning on which our story opens, in plucking a basketful of the fragrant blossoms.

Julia Frampton was just seventeen, budding into womanhood, but still retaining the sweet innocence of girlhood.

Very fair, with a soft and melting look in her large and lustrous eyes, Julia was as sweet and lovable as a painter's dream.

A footstep on the gravel caused her to look around, and the next moment she was clasped in the arms of a tall and handsome young man.

"For shame, Manville!" she exclaimed, as soon as she obtained her freedom. "It is too bad!"

"Don't be angry, darling!" pleaded the young man, "for it is so hard to be continually wearing the mask, as I have to, that I cannot help bursting out sometimes when we are alone."

"I was just thinking about it, Manville," observed Julia, sadly, "and I fear that we are very wicked."

"Wicked?" repeated Manville, as he gazed with admiration at the charming girl before him. "You wicked, Julia? You are an angel, my darling, and——"

"Don't talk nonsense, sir," cried Julia, playfully placing her hand upon her lover's mouth. "You know I don't like being flattered."

"But how are we wicked, my pet?" inquired Manville, slipping his arm around her waist as he spoke; "for loving one another?"

"Not in loving, Manville," answered Julia, a blush rising to her ingenuous face, "but in concealing our affection from my father."

"It may be wrong; possibly it is," said the young man, with a slight accent of bitterness; "but how could we act otherwise? I need not tell you of my uncle's animosity towards me; and did I but hint such a thing as daring to love his only daughter and heiress, I should be dismissed from the Hall within the hour. Not that I should care for that, for I have no doubt I could struggle along somehow or other; but it would mean separation from you, my darling, and it is to avoid that that I submit to many a slight and insult which, under other circumstances, would meet with a very different reception."

"I know it," exclaimed Julia, her sweet eyes dimmed with tears. "I know it, and if possible I love you all the more for your sacrifice. But why is it, darling, that my father dislikes you so much and yet makes such a favourite of your brother Charles?"

"I cannot say, dear," replied Manville, "unless it is that Charles is studious, like my uncle, while I hate the sight of a book and never open one unless I am obliged to do so."

"But why not give way a little to my father's prejudices," suggested Julia, timidly.

"I couldn't do it," exclaimed the young man. "I cannot play the hypocrite. Even for your dear sake I cannot appear otherwise than in my own character, such as it is. My uncle frequently asserts that I am a disgrace to the family, and why? Simply because I am fonder of riding than of reading; prefer liberty to the library; and do not echo and approve of every opinion that he utters."

"Don't say any more, darling," cried Julia, pitifully; "it makes me so wretched and miserable to think that if it were not for me you would not have to submit to all this."

"My sweet pet," answered Manville, "for heaven's sake do not blame yourself, for you are the only drop of sweetness in my cup of bitterness. If it were not for you I should have no object in life. Unloved and uncared for, I would seek my grave anywhere and anyhow, and be thankful when my last hour arrived."

With love and truth beaming in her eyes, Julia raised her blushing face, and for one short moment their lips met, and the seal of mutual affection was given and received.

But their bliss was short lived. Approaching footsteps warned them that an intruder was drawing near, and the next minute Charles, Manville Drake's brother, appeared in sight.

Never were two brothers more dissimilar.

While Manville was broad-chested and muscular, Charles was thin and puny, thoughtful in appearance, and slow of speech.

"Manville!" he exclaimed, as he approached, "our uncle desires your presence in the library AT ONCE!"

"What a nuisance!" cried Manville. "I was just going to have a canter over the downs. What does he want me for, do you know?"

"I cannot say, for certain," replied Charles, in the same measured tones, as though the words were produced by machinery, "but I fear he is angered with you, so I should not delay."

Casting an expressive glance at Julia, Manville observed:

"I suppose I must go in then."

And, jumping over a hedge of roses, he made the best of his way into the house.

Without a change of countenance, Charles drew nearer to Julia, and, taking her hand, remarked:

"I have been looking for you, Julia. I have something of great importance to communicate to you."

"Will not some other time do, Charles?" said Julia, uneasily, as she strove to release her hand. "I wish to go in now."

"There is no time like the present," answered Charles, sententiously, "and what I have to say will not detain you long."

Julia resigned herself to the infliction, and, without looking at her, Charles continued:

"In a communication your father made to me this morning, Julia, he has signified his desire that we should be joined together in matrimony."

The poor girl turned very pale and began to tremble violently.

Without appearing to notice these symptoms of distress, the young man went on to say:

"I answered that I would gladly to consent to the arrangement; and he advised me to inform you of his wishes and ascertain if you were prepared to follow them out."

For a moment Julia was silent, and then she burst forth:

"Oh, Charles, I cannot! Indeed, I cannot, much as it pains me to disobey my father."

"It is illogical and absurd to say that you CANNOT!" answered Charles Drake, calmly. "Say you WILL NOT!"

"It is not that," cried Julia; "but—but—but—I do not love you, Charles, and I never can love you—in fact, I love another, so that it would be wicked of me to become your wife."

"I am quite aware that you love another," replied the young man, with the same cool manner, "for I have been listening to your conversation with him for the last half-hour, but that——"

"You have been listening!" exclaimed Julia, indignantly. "How mean and base of you!"

"Not at all," answered Charles, flushing slightly at the reproach, and forcing a smile which he vainly strove to render arch. "Anything is fair in love and war. Your temporary affection for my brother will soon be overcome. He shall go away, and in a short time you will forget him and transfer your love to me."

"Never! never!" said Julia, firmly. "I love Manville, and if I cannot be his, I will, at all events, never marry another! And now, be good enough, please, to let me pass."

So saying, with heaving breast and flashing eyes, she broke away from his detaining grasp and was quickly out of sight.

"Humph!" muttered Charles, as he followed the girl's receding figure with his eyes. "Very wonderful how excitable and impulsive women are! Never mind! there is plenty of time for her to forget Manville and become accustomed to me."

CHAPTER II.

THE DISGRACE TO THE FAMILY.

Francis Frampton, Esq., LL.D., J.P., etc., etc., of Weddington Hall, Warwickshire, was an excessively proud man. He was a scholar of no mean attainments, but he lived entirely in the past, and knew no more of what was going on in the world around him than the merest schoolboy.

His wife died shortly after the birth of Julia; and his sister's two children being left orphans about the same time, through an epidemic of cholera, he sent for Manville and Charles Drake and had them brought up with his own child.

Mr. Frampton was seated in his arm-chair, intently engaged in the perusal of an ancient and venerable-looking tome, when Manville entered the room.

The young man waited for some minutes in silence, without any notice being taken of his presence. Then he remarked:

"You sent for me, uncle?"

Mr. Frampton, aroused by the sound of the voice, looked around as though just awaking from sleep.

"Eh? What?" he exclaimed. "Oh! it's you, sir, is it?" he continued, an expression of anger and grief rising to his face as he recognized his nephew. "And you can actually look me in the face without blushing?"

"Why should I not?" inquired Manville. "I am not aware of having committed any particularly heinous crime!"

"I am sorry to behold such brazen-faced impudence in one of my blood!" observed the old gentleman. "Where there is shame there is hope of reformation; but for you, sir, there is no hope! You are a disgrace, sir!—a disgrace to the family! I am thoroughly disgusted and ashamed——"

"Pardon me, sir," interrupted Manville, a little warmly; "but if you would be kind enough to tell me what I have done to merit such reproaches, I might take them more to heart, for at present I am sure I don't know what you are driving at!"

"Pshaw, sir! Don't attempt to deceive me!" replied Mr. Frampton. "This assumption of innocence will not go down with me, I can assure you! Manville Drake, painful as it is to me to utter such a word to so near a kinsman, you are a scoundrel, and——"

"Come, come, sir, this is going a little too far!" cried Manville, becoming deadly pale, with the exception of a little red spot on either cheek. "Although you are my uncle, you have no right to insult me in this manner, and if I were forty times your nephew I would not stand it! Once more, I ask you what have I done? Tell me my crime, and if I am guilty you will have a right to reprimand me!"

"Ask your own mind, reprobate!" replied the old gentleman. "Think over the mischief that you have committed within the last twelve months, and your own conscience will answer!"

"I have already told you, sir, that I am unaware of having been guilty of anything more wicked than usual," answered Manville.

"Do you call destroying the peace of mind of an innocent country girl nothing?" exclaimed Mr. Frampton, now worked up to an immense pitch of excitement. "Do you call it nothing to pour distilled poison into a simple maiden's ear—like the serpent that you are—until at length you turn her foolish head and win her innocent heart? And, having succeeded in your wiles, do you call it nothing, as soon as you have accomplished your vile ends, to turn your back upon your victim and disown her?"

"May I inquire to whom you are alluding, sir?" cried Manville, with an expression of genuine surprise and wonder upon his countenance that would have gone far to prove his innocence with anyone less prejudiced than Mr. Frampton.

"Yes, sir, you may," answered that gentleman. "I am speaking of the girl you have ruined, body and soul—Alice Bowman, the daughter of Bowman, the constable!"

"Alice Bowman!" repeated Manville, with the utmost surprise. "Why, I have never spoken half a dozen words to her in my life beyond 'good morning!'"

"What is the use of denying it?" cried his uncle. "Confess your guilt, sir, and make what reparation you can!"

"I would, uncle, if I were guilty!" answered Drake, earnestly. "But I assure you I know nothing whatever about it. I am as innocent as the babe unborn!"

"It is perfectly useless for you to deny it!" exclaimed Mr. Frampton, producing a letter, "for here I have it in the girl's own writing!"

"I don't care a bit for that, sir!" replied Manville. "I give you my word of honour as a gentleman that I am innocent, and that I know no more of Alice Bowman than you do!"

"This is too much for any man's patience!" roared the old gentleman, springing up from his chair. "In the first place you behave like a scoundrel and a rascal, and then you double your crime by denying it and telling a lie!"

"You are deceived, uncle!" cried Manville. "I am speaking the truth!"

"You are the first person I have ever heard of, possessing the old Frampton blood, who turned out a liar!" continued Mr. Frampton, as though he had not heard his nephew, "and I cannot submit your presence under my rooftree any longer! You are a disgrace to the family, and you must go! I will communicate with my lawyer, and direct him to pay you a hundred a year, but I will never see your face any more!"

The old gentleman was evidently somewhat affected as he spoke, and, observing this, Manville answered him in a quieter and gentler strain.

"If I am to leave the Hall, uncle, I should not think of accepting an income from you. If I am not worthy of your society, I am not worthy of your money! But I assure you you are labouring under a misapprehension, and knowing that, whatever your failings may be, you are not naturally unjust, I pray you to investigate the matter fully. Remember, I am your sister's son, and I pledge you my honour that I am innocent of this charge!"

Mr. Frampton hesitated, wavered, and then, glancing at his nephew's noble face, with truth marked on every lineament, he finally succumbed.

"Very well," said he; "I will have the girl up here to-morrow, and the affair shall be gone into thoroughly."

Then, reseating himself in his chair, he picked up his book, which, in his excitement, he had let fall, and was soon absorbed in its contents.

Manville was hardly outside the door when he met his brother Charles.

"Well!" said the latter. "What is it?"

"A most monstrous thing!" answered Manville, indignantly; and he proceeded to inform his brother of the interview that had just occurred.

"Oh! I suppose it will be all right to-morrow!" observed Charles, preparing to move off.

"Undoubtedly it will," replied Manville; and they parted.

Charles then entered the library, and, carefully closing the door, he selected a book, and seated himself on a footstool by his uncle's side.

After reading, or appearing to read, for a short time, Charles suddenly threw aside the book, and began in an excited manner to pace the room.

Mr. Frampton's attention was attracted and he turned round.

"Halloa! is that you, my boy?" he exclaimed. "What's the matter? Has anything gone wrong? Oh, I remember, you went out to see Julia! Has the little jade refused you?"

"Worse than that, sir!" exclaimed Charles.

"What, wouldn't she listen to you at all?"

"Much worse than that, sir!" And he burst into tears.

"What on earth can it be, then?" cried Frampton. "She isn't ill, is she?"

"Not corporeally, sir," answered Charles, "but mentally!"

"What do you mean? Is she mad?"

"No, sir, no! I see I must give you a full explanation; but don't hurry me, sir; I must give vent to my feelings, for it is most painful to me. My own brother, too, of all men!"

"What has that good-for-nothing scamp been doing now?" asked the old gentleman, wrathfully. "By Heaven! I have no peace for him! Every day he is doing something to upset me!"

"When I went to obey your orders, uncle, I was told that Julia was in the rosary," commenced Charles, with an occasional sob to give emphasis, as it were, to his account, "and followed her out there; but as I was about to approach her, I discovered that she was not alone, and my astonishment and horror at the words I heard kept me rooted to the ground! Manville was with her, and was trying to persuade her to run away with him——"

"The scoundrel!" interpolated Frampton.

"He told her not to care for you——"

"The ruffian!"

"That he would marry her; and then you would keep them both for her sake——"

"The cold-blooded mercenary!"

"And I believe he would have over-persuaded her had I not put a sudden stop to the interview by coming forward."

"Oh, Heavens! give me patience!" groaned Frampton. "The ingratitude of the heartless young wretch!"

"Oh, it's very hard, uncle, to be obliged to say such things about one's brother!" moaned Charles. "It cuts me to the heart, it does really; and—and—and I have not told you the worst yet!"

"Go on, my boy, go on!" cried the old gentleman; "I can bear it!"

"I met him just now, and he was laughing and chuckling to himself, and when I inquired, he told me it was at the easy way in which he had fooled you about Alice Bowman. It's very hard, uncle, but, after the kind manner in which you have always treated me, I feel it a duty to inform you of my brother's ingratitude."

"Don't take it so much to heart, my dear boy!" exclaimed the old man. "He is not worth it. Dry your tears and send him in to me. He shall not sleep another night beneath my roof."

Charles Drake's tears were dried in a marvellously short space of time, and he quitted the library in search of his brother.

He found him in the stable, and in a few minutes Manville appeared before his indignant uncle.

"I hear, sir," exclaimed Frampton, "that, in addition to your treachery to the village girl, you have been tampering with the affections of my daughter. Perhaps you will deny that, sir, also?"

"I acknowledge, Mr. Frampton, that I love your daughter," replied Manville. "But surely that is not a crime?"

Mr. Frampton grew white with passion, and a stormy interview followed, which terminated in the old gentleman ordering his nephew there and then out of the house.

"Allow me to speak a few words with Julia before I go," pleaded Manville.

"Not a word, sir!" thundered his uncle. "I forbid it. And, if you have any manly feeling in you, you will not seek an interview against my express commands."

Manville left the room without replying, and in two hours was driving over to the Nuneaton Railway Station with his portmanteaus.

But about the same time Julia's maid entered her room and handed her a small and hurriedly-written note.

Tearing it open, with an ominous sinking at her heart, she read as follows:

"My Own Darling,—The worst has come, and your father has dismissed me from the Hall without the privilege of bidding you farewell. I have been falsified and maligned, but I know not who my enemy is. Whatever you may hear, believe nothing to my disadvantage. A time will arrive when all will be explained, and we shall be happy once more. Until then, my sweet Julia, be true to me, and believe that I am always your loving "Manville."

Without a word or a groan, Julia's head fell back and she became insensible.

CHAPTER III.

A GLIMMERING OF LIGHT.

Matters went on in their usual course at Weddington Hall for some months after Manville's departure.

Then Mr. Frampton noticed that his daughter was becoming paler and thinner, and his alarm was excited.

Physicians were called in, but their aid was useless.

They could not trace any organic disease, and Julia did not complain in any way, so their ultimatum was, as it usually is—a change of air.

The old man loved his "lettered ease," but he loved his daughter more; and eighteen months were passed in rambling over the Continent.

But, if there was any difference, the fair girl was more languid and delicate after her return than before.

Amusement was then recommended, and a season in London was tried, but was equally unproductive of good effect.

It was towards the close of the season that one morning, as Mr. Frampton was seated in his sanctum, the servant brought in a telegram. It ran as follows:

"From Alice Bowman, Weddington: To Francis Frampton, Esq., ——— Square, London.—I am dying, and should like to tell the truth about your nephew before I go. Do not say anything to Master Charles, but, for God's sake, come at once!"

A horrible suspicion crept over the old gentleman, and for a few moments he knew not what to do.

Then, suddenly starting to his feet, he moved towards the mantelpiece and rang the bell.

"Tell James to pack my portmanteau," he exclaimed, when the servant arrived; "and have a cab at the door in an hour."

Mr. Frampton left his house in time to catch the mid-day express, after informing Julia that business of importance called him away, and that he should not return until the following day.

It was dusk when he arrived at Nuneaton, but he quickly obtained a conveyance; and in a short time arrived at Weddington.

Having left his portmanteau at the inn, for the Hall was shut up while the family was away, Mr. Frampton proceeded to that part of the village where the constable's cottage was situated.

A light was burning in the upper window, and when the old gentleman rapped at the door it was carried slowly down stairs.

"Ah! Muster Frampton, sir!" exclaimed Bowman, the old constable, as he admitted his visitor. "But this be a sad job, sir! a main sad job! But I'm glad you're come, sir, for the poor girl wouldn't have gone happy unless she'd eased her mind to you."

"Where is she?" inquired Mr. Frampton, huskily.

"Oopstairs, sir," replied Mr. Bowman. "This way, yer honour."

The apartment the dying girl lay in was of the usual type of cottage bedrooms.

With a rafter ceiling, whitewashed walls, and with a rough, but clean plank flooring, destitute of carpet.

She was reclining on a truckle bedstead, breathing very faintly, and with that far-off look in her eyes so often observed in those who are about to depart for the better land.

"Here be Muster Frampton, Alice," exclaimed her father, as he ushered the old gentleman

into the room. "Now thee canst say what thee wants to."

"Ah! then you have come," cried the girl, in a faint, weak voice. "I feared you would not! However, all will be well at last, and I need not die with this heavy sin on my soul!"

"You have something to tell me respecting my nephew, I think," observed Mr. Frampton, who was unaccustomed to death-beds and did not feel comfortable.

"Give me time!" gasped the unhappy girl. "I have not much longer to live, and my breath is short."

Her father placed his arm around her waist, and, raising her attenuated form, gave her a dose of medicine out of a broken tea-cup that stood by the side of the bed. This somewhat revived her, and, after a little while, she commenced:

"I suppose you remember, sir, that I wrote to you between three and four years ago and accused your nephew, Mr. Manville, of betraying and ruining me? Well, sir, that was a falsehood from beginning to end! Charles was the serpent who poisoned my life, and then, when he had succeeded in his base object, he compelled me to write the letter I did accusing his brother of the crime he had committed. I have never been happy since," continued the girl, growing more and more excited as she advanced; "my health has gradually declined, and now I am going to meet my Creator, but I could not do so without first confessing the wrong I had committed."

Mr. Frampton became more and more excited as Alice proceeded in her statement, until at the end he was deadly pale and trembling in every limb.

"Is what you have told me the truth?" he asked, as she concluded. "Will you swear to it?"

"My oath is of but little value," she answered, bitterly; then taking a bundle of letters from underneath her pillow, she continued: "But here are Charles's letters. You know his handwriting and can satisfy yourself."

The old gentleman took the letters, and then observed:

"Is there anything I can do for you? any comfort you desire? Would you like to see the clergyman?"

"There is nothing you can do for me," she replied, wildly. "I have broken the laws of God and man, and am going now to answer for my sins. If ever you see Master Manville again, ask him to forgive me for my crime against him. He was a good young gentleman, and always kind to the poor. Good-bye, father! I am going now. God bless you! I feel so sleepy. God bless——!"

The heavy head sank back, her eyes closed, and she breathed her last.

Terribly upset, and scarcely knowing whether he was standing on his head or his heels, Mr. Frampton made his way back to the inn.

Then discovering that he should be able to catch the up mail train from Nuneaton, he made a hasty meal and started at once for the station.

He was just getting into a carriage when a well-known form hurried along the platform.

He had not time to examine further, or to make inquiries, as the guard was then blowing his whistle, but as he settled himself in his seat the old gentleman was much disturbed, and muttered to himself:

"Very strange! Remarkably strange! That was most certainly Charles Drake, or else I'm losing the use of my eyes! And, if that was Charles, what was he doing down here?"

All the way to town, Mr. Frampton's thoughts and soliloquies were running in the same direction, and it was quite a relief to him when he arrived at the terminus. Calling a cab, he drove home, and the first question that he asked when the servant opened the door was respecting the whereabouts of Mr. Charles.

He had been at home for some time, the footman replied; and Mr. Frampton passed on to his room more perplexed than ever.

He obtained but little sleep that night, and when morning dawned was still undetermined what to do.

A violent attack of his old enemy, the gout, brought on by the worry and excitement of the past twenty-four hours, still further complicated matters, and when he at length decided upon making an alteration in his will, the lawyer and the doctor arrived at the same time.

The will was altered, and the share of the property, with the contingent reversion of the whole (in case of Julia's death), that was to have been Charles's, was left to Manville.

The gout was very painful, but that night Mr. Frampton lay more peacefully—he had made one step in the right direction. The following day he promised himself to proceed still further, by dismissing Charles from the house and instituting measures for the discovery of the missing Manville.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRE!

Big Ben had just struck two, when Mr. Frampton awoke from a fitful doze and discovered that the room was full of smoke!

For a minute he could scarcely realize what it meant, and then, all at once, it flashed upon him. The house was on fire!

Again and again he endeavoured to support himself upon his swollen legs, but in vain, and at length he was forced to sink back, with a bitter groan of pain, on to his bed.

At the same moment his door was abruptly opened, and a figure entered the room and made its way towards the bed, bending low so as to escape the effects of the smoke as much as possible.

One glance, and Mr. Frampton recognized his nephew Charles.

"Ah, Charles, my boy!" he exclaimed, delightedly. "So you have come to save me. Good boy! good boy! The past shall be forgotten, and we will make everything right again."

Charles did not reply, but, putting his hand underneath the pillow, he drew forth the will that his uncle had just made and placed it in his pocket.

"Never mind that, Charlie!" cried the old man. "Here, come a little closer and let me put my hand on your shoulder, and I shall be able to get down stairs all right."

"What? You didn't think I had come here to save you?" exclaimed Charles, with a sneering laugh. "No, sir, I am not quite such a fool as that!"

"What do you mean?" inquired his uncle, his blood growing cold in his veins. "You will never leave me here to die?"

"Certainly I shall!" answered Charles, fiercely and heartlessly. "I've been working for some time to obtain the estate at Weddington and your fortune. You have found me out, but you have found me out too late; you will never have the chance of reversing your will again. We went down by the same train, and I heard the confession from the outside of the window. That settled me, and when I heard that you had altered your will in favour of Manville—you need be surprised, for all your servants are in my pay—I at once decided on a bold stroke; and this is the consequence of that decision. Your house is rapidly burning, and you and your lovely daughter will be burnt in it. The lawyer will not be able to find the new will, and under the old one I shall take possession of Weddington. How do you think I have worked matters, eh?"

"Oh, Charlie, you surely must be joking!" cried Frampton, in agony. "You cannot be so heartless and cruel! Save me! save my innocent daughter, I beseech you!"

"Not I," answered Charles, coolly.

"In return for the kindness I have shown you—save our lives!" pleaded the old gentleman. "I don't care about the money—you may have it all, only save our lives!"

"Not if I know it," replied Charles. "No, sir, I couldn't possibly ruin my scheme by such an exhibition of soft-heartedness. I should be 'a disgrace to the family' if I did!" Then he muttered to himself: "They'll not suffer much, for they say that the smoke always produces insensibility before the flames arrive."

And, with a sardonic laugh, the heartless young man quitted the room and made his way upstairs, it being his intention to make his escape through the trap-door and on the roof.

Meanwhile an alarm had been given, and the fire engines were dashing at full speed through the deserted streets. The fire-escape came up at a run from the nearest station, and, while the horses were being taken out of the engines and the hose fitted, the man in charge rapidly atranged the ladders.

He had first got the machine in working order, and was hesitating which window he should place it at, when a female servant, who had escaped by the back way, ran up and exclaimed:

"That's the window, Mr. Fireman; master's in there with the gout, and the next room on the right belongs to Miss Julia."

In a moment the escape was fixed, and, axe in hand, like a hero leading a forlorn hope, the gallant fireman ascended to the window pointed out as belonging to the young lady.

A few blows from his powerful arm quickly smashed in the frame of the window, and without pausing a moment he leaped into the room. Just in front of him was the couch, and kneeling by the side of it a form clothed in white.

Snatching a blanket from the bed the fireman prepared to wrap the young lady in it.

Before he had time to cover her up she turned her face towards him. The recognition was mutual.

"Julia!"

"Manville!"

One little shriek of delight, and the poor girl lost consciousness.

In a moment Manville was at the window. There was no time to be lost, for the flooring was already on fire, and he hastened to secure her safety before helping the old gentleman.

As soon as Julia reached the ground Manville hurried into the next apartment. Choked and blinded by the smoke, scorched by the rapidly approaching flames, this was no easy task.

But every moment lost made it worse, as the flooring began to fall in; and, exerting his strength, Manville succeeded in throwing the old gentleman over his shoulder and carrying him to the escape.

Then, not a little singed and burnt, he followed him down.

He had scarcely reached the ground when a shrill, piercing shriek reached his ears, and, looking up, he perceived his brother Charles standing on the parapet of the burning house.

Only a moment he stood thus, and then, with another wild cry, he fell backward into the flames.

Our story is concluded. With the congenial society of Manville the fair Julia rapidly recovered her health, and in due time became Mrs. Drake.

Mr. Frampton is now a grandpapa, and he often says he hopes little Francis will be as good a man as his father, though at one time he did think he was a disgrace to the family!

It is said that when a Russian husband neglects to beat his wife for a month or two, she grows melancholy and complains of his indifference.

A Curious Upholsterer's Bill.—Everybody has heard of the accomplished Parisian laundress who sent in a bill "to washing one skirt, 1 franc," "to putting no starch in it, 25 centimes;" but Mr. Henry Havard, in "L'Illustration," caps it with the following account furnished by an upholsterer:

	Fr.	c.
To getting on chair to hang picture	0	25
To taking nail in right hand	0	05
To passing nail to left hand	0	05
To striking eighteen blows with hammer at 1c.	0	18
To noticing that the nail was not in the centre of the panel	0	50
To replacing it further to the left	1	03
Total	2	06

[ALONE AND FRIENDLESS.]

RHODOPHÉ.

BY KEPPEL BRIERLY.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

CHAPTER I.

THE sun that had been beating fiercely upon Paris all day long was sinking to his rest, as a young man wearily made his way up the narrow and lofty staircase of one of the houses in the Latin Quarter.

He went up and up to the very top, and, turning the key in one of the doors before him, entered a room little better than a garret, and flung himself dejectedly into a chair.

The room was mean-looking in the extreme, and almost bare of furniture. One part of it was divided from the other by a curtain, and served as a bedroom. The remaining space was not very large, but the lack of furniture made it look cold and comfortless. It would have taken far longer to enumerate the articles of furniture which should have been there than those which were. A piano, a common deal table, a couple of chairs—when these were taken note of the inventory was complete. There was no carpet, no pictures on the walls—nothing but the barest necessaries.

The contemplation of his mean and miserable surroundings brought an extra shade of melancholy on the young man's face.

Speaking half aloud, and in a tone at once sorrowful and mournful, he said:

"They say that Paris is the mistress of the world. She is, indeed, a mistress—smiling on men as long as they have gold to lavish upon her, but cold as a marble statue and cruel as the sea to the youth and poverty and the genius that seek to gain her favours.

It was small wonder, perhaps, that Gaston Carreau should utter words like these. Paris, the pleasuring place of the world, had not been a pleasuring place for him. A glance at the young man, as he sat that summer evening in his mean abode, might have told as much.

The handsome, delicately cut face was pinched and care-worn, and there was beginning to come upon him that listless, heartbroken air, which does come over men of finely sensitive natures, who, struggling with the world, find that their struggles are in vain, and they are unfitted for the rough battle of every-day life.

Even had the young man's story been less clearly told in his face and air, his dress would have told the least careful observer that its wearer was a man who had little enough of this world's goods. But, shabby and threadbare as his clothes were, no one could have mistaken Gaston Carreau for anything but a gentleman.

Gaston Carreau was only four-and-twenty now, but ever since he was nineteen he had lived alone and friendless, and now he was beginning to be hopeless as well.

Gaston was a composer and a poet. That he had genius he knew, and years ago he believed that he would have success as well. But as he had grown older he had learned from hard experience the bitter truth that success does not always wait upon genius. Gaston might, indeed, have done well—well, that is, in the way of money getting, had he only stooped, as he would have called it, to give to the world what the world had been taught to like, instead of doing only that which his genius forced him to do. Had he been a little more pliant, a little more ready to tread any crooked path which might lead to ultimate success, his genius might even now, perhaps, have been recognized and his reward won.

The ill success he had met with, and the hard life which was its natural consequence, had deepened the tinge of melancholy in his nature. He shrunk from going into the world, the world of Paris, where he found little sympathy and was looked upon with commiseration as a dreamer of dreams, and as a man whose aim in life had been missed.

He had come to live in himself and in his music. Sitting at his piano, he would sometimes compose and dream, and dream and compose, all day long, and then he was almost happy. He roused himself now and again into fits of energy, and made efforts to bring his compositions before the notice of the world.

But the music publishers and the directors of theatres would have none of him. Some of them recognized his ability, but looked askance upon his compositions as "unsuitable to the public taste." The great work of his life, his opera, his "Rhodophé," in which his genius was concentrated, had lain long in the hands of the Director of the Grand Opera—so long that the paper on which it was written must be yellowing, and the score as faded as his hopes.

Upon his great work, his "Rhodophé," he had based the hopes of success, of fame, of fortune. But he never heard of his opera—yes, he had heard that it would be "considered," that was all. How long would it be before that "consideration" came? Never, it seemed; and Gaston told himself, bitterly, that those who said glibly that genius MUST assert itself, lied.

He was telling himself this as he sat wearily in his poor room. He had sat long in the fading light, getting fainter and fainter, and like his own ambitions, once bright and brilliant as the light had been at noonday, when he was aroused from his sad reflections by a light step on the stair.

"Lizette," he said to himself, as he rose and went to the door.

CHAPTER II.

YES, it was Lizette, the little flower-maker, who, with her sister, occupied the room next to his.

They had lived thus, next door to each other, for more than a year, and had come to know each other well. Very gradually had the acquaintance sprung up. They began by exchanging a brief "good morning" when they met on the staircase. Then they had come to chat a little; and now, if Gaston by any chance failed to see the sweet face of the little flower-maker, smiling always, to hear her joyous laugh or her snatches of song, he seemed to feel his lot harder than before.

And Lizette, when a day passed without an exchange of salutations with the grave young man with the dreamy eyes, or she did not hear the sound of the piano, felt a little pang of regret, and hoped that nothing was wrong with "the genius," as she and her sister called him between themselves.

Lizette's sister, Marie, was a flower-maker, too. But Marie's flower-making was little more than a pretty, or, perhaps we should rather say, a sad, pretence. For Marie, delicate from her childhood, was fading rapidly from the world. Consumption had set in, and she knew that her life on earth was to be numbered by months now.

Lizette had, therefore, to support both herself and her sister, and, though wages were low and work sometimes hard to get, Marie never wanted for anything. Lizette might go dinnerless that Marie should have some little dainty; but Lizette always came home from work joyous and merry, a smile upon her face, and a snatch of melody on her lips—Marie must be cheered and her fading life brightened.

Then Gaston came to know Marie, too, and many a franc of his hardly-earned money—earned chiefly by giving music lessons—was spent in flowers for the poor girl's bedside—flowers that brought gladness to her heart—flowers whose beauty and fragrance she loved, and whose forms she copied with thin, pale fingers, deft even in their weakness.

Lizette was singing as she came up the stairs.

Gaston listened with a thrill of strange emotion, for the strain that she sang was one that he had never heard from any lips save his own—it was the most melodious, the most touching, number in his great opera—the passionate adieu that Rhodophé sang when she quitted her Grecian home, to be borne to the land of the lotus and the palm.

As the final note died upon her lips, Lizette arrived at the top of the stairs, and, catching sight of Gaston, saluted him, blushing faintly the while.

"I have never heard that sung before," said Gaston, in a tone half of pleasure, half of pain. "How did you come to know it—and know it so well, Lizette? Every note and every word is perfect, and you seemed to feel what you sang. You have put all the tenderness and regret into the song that I meant to be expressed."

"Oh, Monsieur Gaston," said Lizette, "I should not have sung it had I known you were here, for perhaps you would not like me to. But how do I know it? Ah! that is easy to tell. I have heard you sing it often—the wall is thin, you know—and I learnt it perfectly. It is the most beautiful song I ever heard! Oh! I know nearly the whole of your opera. I have learned it bit by bit by hearing you sing it. It is great—it is grand, I am sure! I know that, though I know so little about music."

"Thank you, Lizette," said Gaston, simply. "Perhaps—who knows?—the world may come to say so, too—when I am dead!"

"Oh! pray don't say that!" said Lizette, earnestly. "Your 'Rhodophé' MUST be known before then. It will be known, and you will be famous, and the world will know that you are a genius. Some instinct seems to tell me so."

In the girl's eager words there seemed to be something almost of inspiration, and the hope that had been dying in Gaston's breast took a new lease of life.

"Thank you again," he said; "you have made me feel better and stronger by your words."

This little incident seemed to draw the young people into closer communion. There was nothing of love between them. They would neither of them have admitted that; but had either been taken out of the other's life, each would have felt that life was less full and complete than before.

CHAPTER III.

As the summer slowly melted into autumn things went on with little seeming change in the house in the Latin Quarter where our composer and the little flower-maker lived. But there were changes, too. Marie was dying fast now; Lizette's song was less blithe and less frequently heard. Work was getting scarcer than ever, and wages lower; and Lizette found it terribly hard work to earn enough for the support of herself and her sister. Besides, Marie must have delicacies—this, that, and the other little dainty—the doctor said; and the days when Lizette went dinnerless were more frequent now than they had been. Marie must have wine and nourishing food, whatever happened. It would have fared ill, indeed, with the little flower-maker and her dying sister had it not been for Gaston. Often and often did he force Lizette to accept assistance from his own terribly scanty means, in spite of her earnest protests. Perhaps even she did not know how ill he could afford additional calls upon his purse, for she did not know that he, too, suffered sometimes from the want of sufficient food.

But the end came at last. With the falling of the autumn leaves Marie's patient spirit fled, and Lizette was left to face the world alone. Yet not alone. For while Gaston Carreau lived—Gaston, whom she loved (as a brother, she told herself), and whom she revered, too, as a man whose genius, in her eyes, seemed to make him something more than mortal—she knew that she should never want a friend. She owed him now a deep debt of gratitude, and sometimes a wild longing came over her to do something for the man who had brightened the life of her sister as she lay dying, and had helped them, both her sister and herself, in their terrible poverty. Her opportunity did come, and came soon.

For some time Gaston had been looking pale and ill. One evening he came home, his threadbare clothes wet through. Lizette met him on the stairs, and was startled at his changed appearance. He was trembling violently, his face was haggard, and his eyes shone with the unnatural brightness of fever.

In answer to her anxious inquiries, Gaston told the frightened girl that there was really little the matter. Yes, he was chilled. And feverish? Yes, a little. But he would get a good night's rest, and would be better in the morning. With this assurance—an assurance he did not himself believe—he bid her a cheerful good night, went into his room, and, aching in every limb, flung himself upon his bed. But Lizette's fears were not to be allayed by his reassuring words. She hurried to the doctor who had attended her sister, and begged him to come to see Gaston at once.

When the doctor came, he found Gaston feverish and in great pain. He was suffering from a severe attack of rheumatic fever. After telling Lizette how Gaston was to be treated, and promising to send some medicine in the morning, he drew the girl a little away from the bedside, and said that Gaston would probably be ill for at least six weeks—would need the most constant attention and careful nursing.

"He had better have a professional nurse," added the doctor. "You had better send for one at once. I can tell you where to apply."

"No," said Lizette, the colour coming to her cheeks. "I will be his nurse!"

"You!" said the doctor, in surprise, as he looked at the frail little figure before him. "You are worn out now, as it is. You could never bear the fatigue of nursing a sick man for six weeks. Stay! The best thing that can be done is to send him to the hospital. I can get an order for his admission to-morrow. He will be far better off there than here, and——"

"No," replied the girl, firmly. "I thank you for your kindness, doctor, but he shall never go into the hospital and be tended by strangers while I have strength to nurse him. Believe me, he will do well here. If I did not nurse him, he might think me ungrateful, and indeed I should think myself ungrateful. He must not go."

"Well, well," said the doctor, seeing that her determination was taken. "Let it be so. But I shall come and see our patient twice a day. But, mind, if I find you unequal to your task I shall insist upon his going to the hospital. I shall tell him you are killing yourself, and then he would say that I was right, and would relieve you of your labours."

CHAPTER IV.

THE next day Gaston was worse. The fever heightened, and the pain grew more intense. Day after day passed, and the fever did not leave him. Day after day brought fresh paroxysms of pain. Day after day Lizette watched by his bedside, ever on the alert to smooth his pillow, to give him his food and medicine, and cheer him with her sweet presence.

There was no more flower-making now for her, or very little, for attending upon her patient took up nearly all her time. The money she had had when Gaston was taken ill was all gone, and his, too—little enough of it altogether, in good truth. The poor girl was almost distracted. What was she to do? She tried to get a trifling advance from the firm who employed her, but in vain.

Would Gaston have to go to the hospital after all? No, anything but that. She would get money somehow! But how? Suddenly a thought struck her—a hope was born within her. She could sing, and Gaston had told her she could sing well. Could she not go out into the streets and make a few francs by her voice? Would anybody give her anything? She could at least try. She could never have summoned up courage to do this for herself—to go and sing in the streets as the begging women did! There seemed something shameful in it. But then she thought: "No, nothing is shameful that is honest! I could bear anything for his sake! Yes, I will try!"

Gaston was in a quiet sleep. She scribbled a few lines on a piece of paper, telling him she had been obliged to go out and saying when she would return, and left it on the table by his bedside.

Then, throwing an old cloak around her, she passed down the stairs and out into the streets. They were full of people, and for a long time she could not muster up courage to make the attempt she had decided upon.

She crossed the river, and at last, when she found herself in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal, she stopped, and, taking up a position a little removed from the roar of the most frequented streets and the glare of their great shops, she began to sing.

At first her trembling lips could hardly form the words, and her voice sounded strange and unfamiliar in her ears. But as she sang on she gained courage, and the silvery tones of her voice rang out sweetly on the night air. The song she was singing was a simple ballad she had learnt when a child in her Brittany home.

First, one passer-by stopped to listen, and then another and another. Soon there was a little crowd about her, listening with rapt attention to the sweet notes. By the time she had finished the crowd had increased considerably, and Lizette's heart gave a great leap of joy at the murmur of applause with which she was rewarded.

She felt less frightened now, and there was no tremor in her voice as she began to sing once more. She was singing the song she loved best of all songs—Rhodophé's adieu to her native land. She threw into this sad farewell, this song of keen regret and pathetic tenderness, an added pathos of her own, which made it almost seem like an eternal adieu wrung from her own sad heart.

When the last note had died away, the crowd, now vastly increased, stood spell-bound for some moments gazing upon Lizette, who stood in their midst, her eyes wet with tears and her bosom heaving with emotion. Then came a low murmur that swelled into a roar of applause.

With a full heart and an inwardly-breathed prayer of thankfulness, Lizette made a little bow of gratitude. Would they give her money? She could not muster up the courage to appeal to the crowd.

Perhaps there was something of appeal in her glance; perhaps the people round her instinctively understood and sympathized with her embarrassment. At any rate, a working man stepped forward into the clear space that had been left around Lizette, and, taking off his hat, said, as he put a coin into it himself:

"Perhaps those as have been clapping their hands won't mind putting them into their pockets!"

The hat began to circulate among the crowd. In a few minutes it came back to its owner, heavy with copper and silver.

Lizette was beginning, in a voice broken with emotion, to murmur her thanks to her kind

friend, when a servant came out of the house under whose windows she had been standing, and, forcing his way through the crowd, said:

"If you'll be kind enough to step inside, miss, monsieur will change all that money for you. A few napoleons are more easily carried than those francs and sous."

"Oh, thank you!" said Lizette, in a low tone, awe-struck at the light and careless way in which the man spoke of napoleons—real napoleons of solid gold!

Then, bowing her gratitude to the crowd, she followed the servant into the house, and was shown into a handsomely-furnished room.

A kind-looking, elderly gentleman came forward and greeted her with a pleasant smile.

"I have heard your song, my dear, and I have been greatly struck by it." Then, turning to the servant: "Jules, how much money was collected? Five napoleons, I dare say."

Jules had counted up to two napoleons, and there were but a few sous more to add, but, catching his master's meaning look, he replied:

"Monsieur is quite right. There are just five napoleons."

"Then, my dear, allow me to relieve you of your cargo of coppers, and give you these pretty little medals instead."

And, so saying, he put six napoleons into her hand.

Lizette began to pour forth her thanks, but her newly-found friend stopped her and said:

"No thanks are needed. I never give something for nothing. I'm a terribly hard fellow! I want you to tell me something in return for what you call my kindness. I want you to tell me where you came across that song. The man who composed that is a genius, and I want to see him and talk to him."

Lizette was overwhelmed with conflicting emotions at these words. "At last, at last!" she thought, "I can do something for Gaston!" And then she told her new friend all about Gaston—his genius, his hopes, his fears, his trials, his great opera, the "Rhodophé"—everything.

"'Rhodophé!'" said her listener; "'Rhodophé!' Where have I heard that title? Stay! I have it! It was brought me by a young fellow some years back, but, truth to tell, I have never looked at it very carefully. If the song you have sung is a sample of the rest of the opera, it must be a great work. And, oh, yes! I remember his name now—Gaston Carreau, of course. He has been spoken of as a clever fellow—a genius, some people have said; and, sapristi! I think they were right, too! I shall have M. Carreau's opera tried over at once. He shall hear from me before the week is out."

Lizette hurried back to the Latin Quarter as fast as her feet could take her, and found Gaston just awake from a refreshing sleep.

"I feel so much better!" were the first words he said. "The pain is almost gone now, and I feel quite strong. I must make an effort to get up in a day or two."

"You look better," said Lizette; "but are you strong enough to bear a shock, Gaston?"

"A shock! What is it? That all the money is gone? I have been prepared for that!"

"Oh, no, no! It will be a shock, but I must tell you. It will make you better than all the medicine in the world."

And then Gaston heard, with changing emotions, the story of her resolve, her adventure, her success, and the glorious news that the Director of the Orand Opera was really about to "consider" his opera at last.

From that day Gaston made wonderful strides towards health; and on the very day that he was able to sit up he received a letter from the Director of the Grand Opera, announcing that he intended to put "Rhodophé" in rehearsal immediately, and requesting Gaston to call upon him at his earliest convenience. In due course "Rhodophé" was produced, and took Paris, and indeed the whole musical world, by storm.

The long struggle was at an end at last. Lizette's words had come true.

"You will be famous," she had said, "and the world will know that you are a genius."

Gaston's position was well summed up in the columns of a Paris journal. At the end of a long and eulogistic criticism of "Rhodophé," the writer said: "The genius of Gaston Carreau has been recognized by the whole world, and the name of Gaston Carreau will be writ large and in ineffaceable characters on the roll of fame."

In the same journal appeared, some few weeks after, the following paragraph:

"There is no truth in the rumour that M. Gaston Carreau is about to wed an English countess. We are authorized to state that M. Carreau will shortly lead to the altar Mademoiselle Lizette Lacroix, a young lady whom M. Carreau has known for some years."

SCIENCE.

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS.

BY W. J. H. CLARK.

The present is always one of the busiest months of the year for the entomologist; every bush and tree teems with insect life, and both butterflies and moths in the imago or perfect state, and larvæ and pupæ, are to be found everywhere. The collector has only to take out his net or sugaring-pot, as the case may be, and a profusion of game is sure to meet his eyes.

Among the butterflies that are out now we may notice the handsome, but rather scarce, Swallow Tail (Papilio machaon), seldom to be found but in the fens of Cambridge, the Brimstone (Gonepteryx rhamni), the well-known Large Garden White (Pieris brassicæ), the Small White (Pieris rapæ), the Green-Veined White (Pieris napi), the Orange Tip (Euchelia cardamines), the Pearl-Bordered Fritillary (Argynnis euphrosyne), the Greasy Fritillary (Melitæa artemis), the Granville Fritillary (Melitæa cinxia), the Speckled Wood (Satyrus ægeria), the Wall Brown (Satyrus megæra), the Green and Purple Hairstreaks (Thecla rubi and Thecla quercus), the Small Copper (Polyommatus phlæas), Brown Argus (Lycæna agestis), Silver-Studded Blue and Small Blue (Lycæna ægon and Lycæna alsus).

Great numbers of the moths make their appearance now, and many of the common hawk moths will be out some time during the month. In the course of the ensuing weeks we may probably find the following:—The Eyed Hawk (Smerinthus ocellatus), the Poplar Hawk (Smerinthus populi), the Lime Hawk (Smerinthus tiliæ), the rare Spurge Hawk (Deilephila euphorbiæ), the very pretty small Elephant Hawk (Chærocampa porcellus), the Humming-bird Hawk (Macroglossa stellatarum), remarkable for its rapid flight and habit of hovering steadily over a flower whilst thrusting in its exceedingly long proboscis to obtain its food; the Broad and Narrow-bordered Bee Hawks (Macroglossa fuciformis and Macroglossa bombyliformis), two insects which take their names from a striking resemblance they possess to the Wild Bee.

The commonest of our Clearwing Moths, the little Currant Clearwing (Sesia tipuliformis), is now on the wing, and is generally to be found on or near currant bushes.

The Common Swift (Hepialus lupulinus) and Ghost Swift (Hepialus humuli) are both out now. The male Humuli is a most handsome insect, the wings being pure white, with yellow edges on the upper, and of a dusk black on the under side; it is a very abundant species. The pretty little Green Forester (Ino statices), the Least Black Arches (Nola cristulalis), the Cinnabar (Euchelia jacobææ), Wood Tiger (Chelonia plantaginis), White Ermine (Arctia menthrasti), Pale Tussock (Orgyia pudibunda), and Lappet (Lasiocampa quercifolia), are all on the wing.

Among the Geometræ Family, the Spotted Yellow (Venilia maculata), Scorched Wing (Eurymene dolobraria), Scalloped Hazel (Odontoptera bidentata), Brimstone (Rumia cratægata), the very common Currant Moth (Abraxas grossulariata), together with many others, may be found in the beginning of this month.

Several of the Cuspidatæ are now out, the Puss Moth (Cerura vinula) and the Pebble Prominent (Notodonta ziczac) being most common.

A great number of the Noctuæ are now on the wing. Among them we may expect to find the following:—The Alder (Acronycta alni), the Bramble (Acronycta rumicis), Common Wainscot (Leucania pallens), Bird's Wing (Dipterygia pinastri), Doubtful Nutmeg (Mamestra anceps), Cabbage Moth (Mamestra brassicæ), Treble Lines (Grammesia trilinea), Double Square Spot (Noctua triangulum), etc. These, and several others more or less scarce, are to be obtained during the month, but success depends, in a great measure, on weather and other extraneous circumstances.

In all cases I have given the Latin names together with the English, the former being most important. The first Latin name shows to what family the insect belongs; the second, the specific name, is used only for that particular individual. The specific name must be learnt together with the English, as genuine collectors invariably employ the former when speaking of a butterfly or moth, the advantage being that many insects have purely local names, and an entomologist from, say, the south of England, would find the same insect called by a very different English name in the north country, but the Latin appellation is the same all over the world.

A great many caterpillars are to be found this month on the trees and hedges. If the lepidopterist comes across any in the course of his travels, he would do well to box them, together with a piece of the tree on which they are feeding, and breed them up. A hat-box, with a piece of net stretched over the top, acts as a fair elementary breeding-house. Feed the caterpillars once a day with fresh leaves, but do not handle them, as they are very delicately organized, and a slight squeeze might do them considerable injury.—"Knowledge."

President Arthur's Oyster Forks.—At the President's state dinners six wine glasses, a goblet, and a carafe of ice water are at each plate, and on the large and beautifully-folded and embroidered napkin lays a card bearing the name of the guest to whom the seat is allotted. Besides the proper array of knives, forks, and spoons, each plate is supplied with one of the exquisite oyster forks recently presented to the President. A number of his friends in New York, hearing that the Executive silver-chest was lacking in these table requisites, ordered three dozen oyster forks of Tiffany. They are slender little forks of antique hammered silver, with dainty bees and winged things in raised niello and oxide work on their handles, the pointed prongs tipped with gold.

Old German Newspapers.—At the end of last year there were in circulation in Germany 4,413 newspapers. Of these 98 were older than the present century. Among them the "Frankfürter Journal," 261 years old; the "Magdeburg Zeitung," 253 years old; the "Leipziger Zeitung," 221 years old; the "Jenaische Zeitung," 207 years; the "Augsburger Postzeitung," 195 years; the "Gothaische Zeitung," 190 years; the "Vosetsche Zeitung," 159 years; the "Berlin Intelligenzblatt," 128 years; the "Kolnische Zeitung," 84 years. There are 200 newspapers averaging from 80 to 50 years; 1,127 averaging from 50 to 21 years; 1,542 between 20 and 6 years; and 1,380 between 5 years and 3 months old. Altogether there are 1,491 German newspapers more than 20 years old. That a newspaper's existence in Germany is often a very ephemeral one may be inferred from the fact that 20 per cent. of the newspapers which circulated through the German Post-office in 1880 came first into existence within the same year, and the average existence of those newspapers was not more than six months. Some have been more hardy, and have survived into the present year.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE AMONG THE CHOCTAWS OF MISSISSIPPI.

THE two thousand Choctaws still living in their ancestral homes in Mississippi retain, in their pristine vigour, many of the usages of their ancestors. Among these are the methods employed in conducting a courtship and the marriage ceremony.

When a young Choctaw, of Kemper or Neshoba county, sees a maiden who pleases his fancy, he watches his opportunity until he finds her alone. He then approaches within a few yards of her, and gently casts a pebble toward her, so that it may fall at her feet. He may have to do this two or three times before he attracts the maiden's attention. If this pebble throwing is agreeable, she soon makes it manifest; if otherwise, a scornful look and a decided "ekwah" indicate that his suit is in vain.

Sometimes, instead of throwing pebbles, the suitor enters the woman's cabin and lays his hat or handkerchief on her bed. This action is interpreted as a desire on his part that she should be the sharer of his couch. If the man's suit is acceptable, the woman permits the hat to remain; but if she is unwilling to become his bride, it is removed instantly. The rejected suitor, in either method employed, knows that it is useless to press his suit, and beats as graceful a retreat as possible.

When a marriage is agreed upon, the lovers appoint a time and place for the ceremony. On the marriage day the friends and relatives of the prospective couple meet at their respective houses or villages, and thence march toward each other. When they arrive near the marriage ground—generally an intermediate space between the two villages—they halt within about a hundred yards of each other. The brothers of the woman then go across to the opposite party and bring forward the man and seat him on a blanket spread upon the marriage ground. The man's sisters then do likewise by going over and bringing forward the woman and seating her by the side of the man. Sometimes, to furnish a little merriment for the occasion, the woman is expected to break loose and run. Of course she is pursued, captured, and brought back.

All parties now assemble around the expectant couple. A bag of bread is brought forward by the woman's relatives and deposited near her. In like manner the man's relatives bring forward a bag of meat and deposit it near him. These bags of provisions are lingering symbols of the primitive days when the man was the hunter to provide the household with game, and the woman was to raise corn for the bread and hominy. The man's friends and relatives now begin to throw presents upon the head and shoulders of the woman. These presents are of any kind that the donors choose to give, as articles of clothing, money, trinkets, ribbons, etc. As soon as thrown they are quickly snatched off by the woman's relatives and distributed among themselves. During all this time the couple sit very quietly and demurely, not a word spoken by either. When all the presents have been thrown and distributed, the couple, now man and wife, arise, the provisions from the bags are spread, and, just as in civilized life, the ceremony is rounded off with a festival, which over, the company disperse, and the gallant groom conducts his bride to his home, where they enter upon the toils and responsibilities of the future.

A MAN with four wives was brought before a Dutch justice on a charge of bigamy. "Four vives?" exclaimed the astonished Hans; "four vives? Dat vas a most hinocious crime! Discharch him at vonst!" Why?" protested the prosecutor; "why discharge him when the proof is positive? Will the court explain?" "Yes, I ecksplains. If he lif mit four vives, he got bunishment enough. I lif mit von, and I got too much bunishment already."

FACETIÆ.

PLANTING FOR FLOWERS.

IF YOU PLANT	WHAT WILL SPRING UP?
A Sewing-Machine	Hemlock
The Lord Mayor	London Pride
Prince Leopold	Pennyroyal
Mr. Gladstone	Solomon's Seal
A Churn	A Buttercup
A Puppy	A Dog Rose
A Widow	Weeds
A Friend	Quaker's Grass
A Pair of Spectacles	Eyebright
A Fox	Henbane
A Watch	Thyme
A Tablecloth	Flax
A Calf	A Cowslip
A Bee	Honeysuckle
The Bank of England	Mint
A Jesuit	Monkshood
A Tea-Cup	A China Rose
A Sea Fish	A Crab Apple
A River Fish	Periwinkles
Your Tongue	Loosestrife
Your Feet	Capers
A Lump of Ice	Snowdrops
An Actress	Columbine
An Authoress	A Bluebell
A Needle	Thrift
A Dandy	Cockscomb
A Weather Vane	A Windflower
A Ghost	Deadly Nightshade
An Egg	Hen and Chickens
The Daughters of the Primates of All England	York and Lancaster Roses and Canterbury Bells

"PAT!" "What, sor?" "Did you ever see a winter like this?" "Yis, sor." "When?" "Las' summer, sor."

"FIRST class in music, stand up. How many kind of metres are there?" "Three, sir—long metre, short metre, and metre by moonlight alone."

A SCRAP OF GUN HISTORY.—Guns wuz invented sum time back, and in time of war are konsidered a furst-klass invention fur demoralizing an enemy. The furst gun ever invented and used in time ov war wuz kalled an insignificant club, and wuz considered a sure shot at short range. The next gun that I can read ov wuz invented by an ingenuous Irishman and wuz kalled a shelalia, and differed materially from the furst invention, owing to the astonishing fact thet she shot from both ends to wonst. And many a bold soldger-boy went to an ontimely end, on'onered and onsung, busted by an insignificant club or shot with a double-barreled shelalia. Now about this time muskits wuz invented. They shot with a fuze, and if they didn't demoralize the enemy they did the men that shot them off. I red a scrap of history wonst where in an anshent battle sum musketeers played havoc with the enemy by gitin' their pieces off three times in seven hours, or seven times in three days—I don't mind just which it wuz, and it don't make no particular difference fur such a short time. It wouldn't be much to brag on fur quick shootin' nohow. I believe the anshent historian when he says it was a well-contested battle and has the additional circumstances to add thet nobody got hurt. My grandpap wuz a powerful warrior and owned a wunderful shootin'-iron, and after he got to be an old man he used to take down old Betsy and count the notches in the stock. He said it wuz every notch an Indian and sumtimes two. He said he never could count them notches or smell burnt powder but he wanted to skulp a Kuskaroarin Indian, and I believe my grandpap to be as truthful as most boys' grandpaps are. I rekon the self-regulatin', everlastin', enemy-defyin' John Henery rifle is konsidered by all odds the best gun ever invented for annihilatin' a peskey enemy. You just place the breech in your catteridge-box, say, "Lord, hev murcy on their wicked souls!" and bang away.

A LECTURER is telling "How We Hear." It is easily told. Somebody tells a friend of ours, and tells him not to tell: that's the way we hear.

AN extreme teetotaler of our acquaintance has declared his inability to sympathize with Turkey, for fear of being accused of an adherence to the Porte.

A NEW JERSEY horse-doctor attempted to prescribe for a man, and succeeded in killing him. This proves that man hasn't the constitution of a horse.

NEIGHBOUR'S pretty daughter: "How much is this a yard?" Draper's son: "Only one kiss." "If it is so cheap I will take three yards, and grandma will pay you."

THE sausage-maker every day
Improves each shining hour,
And gathers tomcats all the way
From every street and tower.

"I PUT outside my window a large box filled with mould, and sowed it with seed. What do you think came up?" "Wheat, barley, or oats?" "No, a policeman, who ordered me to remove it."

THE laziest boy exists in Connecticut. His mother sent him to a neighbour's house after a cup of sour milk. On being told that there was none but sweet milk to be got, he helped himself to a chair, and said, "Well, I'll wait till it sours."

A SINECURE.—One Patrick Maguire had been appointed to a situation the reverse of a place of all work; and his friends who called to congratulate him were much astonished to see his face lengthen on the receipt of the news. "A sinecure is it?" he exclaimed. "The deuce thank them for that same. Sure I know what a sinecure is. It's a place where there's nothing to do, and they pay ye by the piece!"

A GENTLEMAN, wishing to buy a horse, was shown one that was very poor in flesh, but which suited him very well. "Do you warrant him sound?" he asked. "Yes, perfectly," was the reply, "except that he does not look very well." The gentleman bought the horse and drove him home. The next day he came back with him, very mad. "I thought you said this horse was sound?" he said. "So he is, with the exception of what I told you," was the reply of the dealer. "But he is as blind as a bat, you cheat!" "Well, didn't I tell you that he didn't look well?"

"CAN I see the lady of the house?" inquired the peddler. "Well, yes, you can, if you ain't blind!" snapped the woman who had answered the bell. "Oh, beg pardon, madam. You are the lady of the house, then?" "Yes, I am! What d'yer take me for? Did yer think I was the gentleman of the house, or the next-door neighbour, or one of the farm-hands, or the cat, or the ice-chest?" "I didn't know, madam, but you might be the youngest daughter." "Oh, did yer? Well, that was nat'ral, too," replied the lady of the house. "What d'yer want, sir?" Then the peddler displayed his wares, and when he left that door-step half an hour later his face was full of pleasure and his pockets were full of money. He understood human nature and had made a good sale.

A CERTAIN witness, in an action for assault and battery, mixed things up considerably in giving his account of the affair. After relating how Dennis came to him and struck him, he proceeded: "So, yer honour, I just hauled off and wiped his jaw. Just then his dog came along, and I hit him again." "Hit the dog?" "No, yer honour, hit Dennis. And then I up with a stun and throwed it at him, and it rolled him over and over." "Threw a stone at Dennis?" "At the dog, yer honour, and he got up and hit me again." "The dog?" "No; Dennis. And wid that he stuck his tail between his legs and run off." "Dennis?" "No; the dog. And when he came back to me, he got me down and pounded me, yer honour." "The dog came back at you?" "No; Dennis, yer honour, and he isn't hurt any at all." "Who isn't hurt?" "The dog, yer honour."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Tulle.—Situations in millinery shops are obtained by personal application, or replying to or inserting advertisements.

Amy.—Dark brown eyes, shaded by long lashes, are very bewitching. We do not wonder at the young man being so desperately in love, and therefore, as you say, so troublesome.

Law.—You must go to a solicitor.

Leonetta.—Washing the hair with soda is probably the cause of your hair having a reddish tinge.

Maud.—The marriage would be legal.

Vinaigrette.—Bathing the face in sour milk will occasionally remove freckles. We answer this question nearly every week.

Bluebell.—The Prince of Wales was born at Buckingham Palace.

Engaged.—A mixture of rose-water and glycerine will make the hands soft and white.

Medicine.—The man was most decidedly a quack.

M. M. S.—The conjunction "and" occurs 35,543 times in the Old Testament, and 10,684 in the New.

Littlewood.—You should obtain the advice of a medical man at once, or it may end fatally.

Buttercup.—Equal quantities of turpentine, linseed oil, vinegar, and spirits of wine, will make a very good polish. Rub it on with a linen rag, and polish with a clean duster.

Grace Darling.—1. The white marks on your fingernails arise from blows upon them, and they mean a temporary disturbance in their formation, which is productive of opaque spots. As the nails grow upward and are cut, such marks will gradually disappear. 2. Soap is essential to preserving the skin clean and healthy. 3. In your case it will be better to wash in water neither hot nor cold, but in luke-warm water. 4. Pare away the hard dry skin from their tops, and touch the warts each with a drop of strong acetic acid, taking care that it does not touch the skin, for if it does inflammation and pain will be occasioned.

A Radical.—In this country the king or queen are but the creations of the law, and any alteration of the law being possible to the popular will, they might both be done away with.

Bertram.—"Gwyndy" means, in Welsh, "the white-washed house."

Bar.—There is, we believe, such a case on record, in which a dying soldier traced his will in the sand with his sword, and it was held good in law. You will find it noticed in "The New Monthly Magazine" for July, 1826.

Frederick Pinch.—Julien Ouvrard was born in Brittany, on October 11th, 1771. He was originally a grocer, and, according to some accounts, by his bankruptcy and a clever (but very dishonest) scheme associated with it, in which his wife played her part, he realized enough money to commence the speculations which won for him that immense fortune. His memoirs will give you quite new ideas on the subject of Napoleon's character. We do not think they were ever translated into English; great efforts were made to suppress them.

Lybsom.—A really charming face, and very elegant figure! Your portrait, if it is your's (you do not say so positively), is something to preserve carefully—a joy for ever-ybody who sees it. Handwriting tolerably good: spelling very bad.

Juliet.—Your face and figure would be an acquisition to any stage, and would doubtless suffice to procure you an engagement of a certain kind; but something more is required to make the actress.

L. V.—We are, of course, too late to be serviceable with our advice. Each number of The London Reader goes to press a long way in advance of the date it bears, in order to meet the demands of the trade. While the diarrhoea was so severe you should have taken nothing but rice-water, and it may be rice, in very small quantities at a meal. Meat or bread would do you harm.

S. T. B.—Bones make excellent fuel, if you do not object to the smell, which is only suggestive of the kitchen. During the Russian campaign of 1829, the troops at Adrianople, suffering severely from cold, ransacked the cemeteries for bones to make fires with.

Early Bird.—To prepare tea over-night for use in the morning, separate it from the tea-leaves when made, and warm it up in the morning. It is due to the presence of the tea-leaves that tea long made has a bitter taste and is unwholesome.

Grace Tayler.—In the absence of tin-foil, you may exclude the damp by waxed paper. A flat-iron heated and a little wax will enable you to prepare the paper.

B. W.—You probably dried the wood too quickly, and so made it brittle and hard.

J. Short.—Ole Bull, the violinist, was a Norwegian. He died in August, 1880; he was born in 1810.

C. J.—The Glasgow Mechanics' Institution was established in 1823.

Charles Wheeton.—In the case of a lady so coquettish, young, and beautiful, and so deeply absorbed in her passionate love of admiration, you should certainly be very sure indeed that her love for yourself is as true, tender, and strong as your own. It is to be hoped that you are not of a jealous disposition—"that way madness lies!"

Sobriety.—Such excessively ardent flames require a large amount of fuel to keep them burning, or, as the old song says of the young man's ire, "like straw i' the fire," they soon burn out. You naturally find the lady exacting, and she is likely to continue so.

Crabshell.—She would probably make you an excellent wife.

Jane Errol.—Probably Jeremy Bentham, who bequeated his body, in the interests of science, to his friend, Dr. Southwood Smith.

James W.—The meanings vary so much that we are unable to tell.

Ady.—1. There is no law to interdict the Queen marrying a commoner. 2. The consent of the Crown is necessary.

Youthful.—Yes; it is stated that Nelson never knew what fear was; but, on the other hand, it is also stated, in the "Personal Recollections" of Cyrus Redding, that when driving through Fonthill with its owner, the horses displaying a little ordinary freshness made the hero so uneasy that at length he alighted, declaring that he "could not bear it any longer."

D. B.—The original "Lass of Richmond Hill" was Hannah Lightfoot, who lived with her mother, near Richmond, and the song was written to please Prince George, her lover. Her maiden name was Wheeler. She ran away from home, and thereby broke her mother's heart.

J. K.—Francis and Bean made their attempts on the life of her Majesty in 1842, and the late Prince Consort, writing to his father of the last-named rascal, under date July 4th, said: "As we drove to the chapel of St. James' Palace yesterday, a hunchbacked wretch tried to shoot at the carriage in which Victoria, myself, and uncle Leopold were sitting. The pistol missed fire, and a boy of sixteen, called Dassett, tore the weapon out of his hand and collared him, calling at the same time to the crowd to secure the assassin. Everybody laughed, and the people cried: 'Give him back his pistol; it's only a joke!' Little Dasset and his brother, however, dragged the fellow to some policemen, who only laughed, and pushed them away as making fun of them. The crowd pressed upon poor Dasset in such a way that he had to let the hunchback go. Not satisfied, however, Dasset, followed by the mob, went to a policeman and showed him the pistol. The policeman seized him, thinking he was the culprit, and wanted to get off by shamming that he had taken the pistol from somebody else. By this time others came up who had seen the attempt, including the boy's uncle, who had been present, and there was no longer any doubt of the fact." The pistol was found to contain gunpowder, paper, and pieces of a clay pipe. Bean was a chemist's assistant, and his attempt was made on the very day after that on which Francis had received a pardon on the ground that his execution would have been unlawful, the act not having been committed with intent to kill or wound.

M. P.—If the parties reside in different parishes, the banns must be published in each.

Milly.—1. You can get what you require of any chemist. 2. Prices range from five to seven shillings. 3. We have known camphorated oil promote the growth of whiskers.

Inquisitive.—You will find lunar caustic useful for destroying warts. See reply to "Grace Darling."

J. J. P.—We cannot answer such a question.

Lucille.—You can mix any scent you please with the beef-marrow when warm. Yes; we consider it one of the best pomades.

Discontented.—Nitrate of silver is at the base of most of the hair dyes. Why do you wish to change the colour of your beautiful nut-brown hair? See reply to "Maud."

Lizzie.—Yes; the author is alive, and, we hope, in good health.

Maud.—The continual use of a leaden comb will darken the hair.

Laurence.—1. You can renovate your faded silk dress by sponging it with soap and water, and afterwards wiping on a flat board with a soft piece of linen. 2. Large seeds, such as sweet-peas, should be sown quite an inch deep; while small, about the size of mignonette, should be but slightly covered.

Redgauntlet.—You should make a confidant of your intended husband, as it may leak out after marriage and cause a great deal of misery.

Hair.—Florence's, golden brown; Maud's, flaxen; Empress's, auburn.

Eugene Aram.—You will find that equal parts of sweet lard and suet, melted together, coloured with alkanet root, and perfumed with essence of bergamot, will make an excellent lip-salve.

Self-Taught.—The best way for you to master French would be to become a member of a literary institute, and attend the evening-classes for the study of languages.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.—Shakespeare is the usual mode of spelling the name.

K.—You should not allow the salt-spoons to remain in the salt, or they will spot and canker. On their removal from the table they should be washed, and placed in the plate-basket.

E. T.—Providing you died intestate, the property would be divided equally between your mother, brothers, and sisters.

Lucia.—The parents of the bride should provide the breakfast, cake, etc.

Songster.—You can get the pieces you require at any music publisher's.

Jeannette.—You are suffering from scrofula. Apply to a physician. Half a pint of sarsaparilla taken daily will purify the blood.

M. Brown.—1. Birds and flowers should not be kept in your bedroom. The sensations you experience on rising in the morning are probably due to impure air. 2. "Gregory," signifying "watchfulness," is derived from the Greek.

Lemuir.—Your letter was written in such bad English that we could make no sense of it. Get an English friend to write for you.

Adrienne.—1. The portrait exists, and we have seen it. It depicts a girl about twenty, with a beautiful oval face, glorious brown eyes, and classical features. 2. Hair a deep warm brown.

Nil Desperandum.—We should denounce him as one of the most despicable quacks in London.

Tennysonian.—The beautiful and touching dedication to the memory of Prince Albert prefaced the edition of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King."

A Sufferer.—Your bad state of health accounts for your hair falling off. The use of a rough, sharp-toothed comb is injurious to the scalp.

Ernestine.—If you wish for a healthy-looking complexion you must rise early, pay particular attention to your diet, take regular out-door exercise, and avoid tight lacing and boots as you would a plague. Occupy the mind with pleasant and congenial studies.

Wilton.—The Great Fire of London occurred in 1666.

Lydia.—We should say your Bible, dated 1605, would be worth about £2 to a collector of rare books.

J. R.—Have you not read of the spider that tried to coax a fly into its web? "Beware! have a care, she is fooling thee!"

Counter Jumper.—You will find that daily washing your feet in cold water will strengthen and harden them.

Butterfly.—"Fille de chambre" is French for chamber-maid.

Iona.—February 13th, 1783. Trial of Warren Hastings.

Edith.—The breaking of the voice generally occurs between the ages of fourteen and sixteen.

Tom Altraver.—1. You are right, but have spelt the name wrong. S. C. Borromeo first founded a Sunday-school. 2. At Milan.

Frost.—Yes; a widow can legally marry her deceased husband's brother.

Cock of the Walk.—1. Milton's grand-daughter was Mrs. Fisher, at whose death the family became extinct. 2. A chandler's shop at Lower Holloway.

Mammon.—1. Guineas were so named from the gold with which they were first made being brought from Guinea. 2. Yes; in the reign of George I. silver pennies were used.

Winter.—The legend of the robin redbreast is, that while our Saviour was carrying His cross, one of these birds took a thorn from His crown, the blood on which dyed its breast.

Charlotte.—Mrs. Williams, Homer Place, New Road.

American.—1. Elizabeth Barker. 2. Executed at Tyburn, 1534. 3. "Holy Maid of Kent."

Bibliography.—1. Wickliffe translated the first English Bible. 2. You will find the verse in Psalm xiv. 3. Flavius Josephus. 4. The Koran.

Lady Audley.—T—The third finger of right hand for lady's engaged ring, and fourth finger of gentleman's left hand.

Nellie.—

"Convince a man against his will,
He's of the same opinion still."

Why trouble yourself to convince him?

Smoker.—You can remove the scratches from your meerschaum by allowing it to soak for a short time in warm water. Dry it with black crape.

W. B.—Miss Strickland's "Lives of the Queens of England" will give you the information you require.

M. V.—Consult an occulist.

OUR SERIAL TALES.

	No.
Dregs and Froth *commenced in*	992
The Withered Branch *commenced in*	992
Sweet Inisfail *commenced in*	999

All the back Numbers, Parts, and Volumes of the London Reader are in print, and may be had at the Office, 334, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom post free for Three Halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

The London Reader, post free, Three Halfpence Weekly; or Quarterly One Shilling and Eightpence.

Life and Fashion, Vols. I. and II., Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence each.

Everybody's Journal, Parts I. to IV., Price Threepence each.

*** Now Ready, Vol. XXXVIII. of the London Reader. Price Four Shillings and Sixpence.

Also the Title and Index to Vol. XXXVIII., Price One Penny.

NOTICE.—Part 237 (June) Now Ready, Price Sixpence; post free, Eightpence.

N.B.—Correspondents must address their Letters to the Editor of the London Reader, 334, Strand, W.C.

††† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily authors should retain copies.

☞ When no answer is given in the columns of the London Reader it must be understood the Editor is unable to comply with the request made.

London: Printed and Published by the Proprietor, M. A. Pawsey, at 334, Strand, W.C.